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Independence Day on Mars

Pathfinder buggy safely down on red planet

By Nigel Hawkes
SCIENCE EDITOR

MARS Pathfinder, carrying its 22lb remote-control rover buggy Sojourner, plunged through the Martian atmosphere last night, marking the first visit to the surface of the red planet for more than 20 years.

At just after 6pm as America celebrated Independence Day, Rob Manning, the Flight Director, announced to cheering scientists at mission control in Pasadena, California, that the spacecraft had landed and was broadcasting a signal.

"We're down," a delighted Mr Manning shouted. He based his claim on an unexpected radio signal received from the spacecraft. The signal indicated that Pathfinder was on the surface of Mars after its 309-million-mile journey and in a stable condition, although Mr Manning added: "There is still a lot to be done. We are not out of the woods."

The signal, apparently from the spacecraft's automatic landing system, suggested that Pathfinder had landed with the "base pedal", one of the sides of the spacecraft, on the ground, the best possible position. The news brought to an end a nail-biting descent in



Reporters are briefed at Pasadena on the success of the Mars landing by Rob Manning, the mission's Flight Director. The backdrop is a model of the spacecraft and its buggy

which everything appeared to have gone smoothly. Controllers had "applauded" earlier when Guy Beutelschies, the flight engineer, announced that the latter section had separated successfully at the start of the descent.

Because Pathfinder landed during the Martian night, its transmitter was turned off to conserve power. When the Sun rose at about 10pm BST last night, controllers expected

the solar cells to start generating so that the transmitter could be turned on again.

They were pleased with the accurate course followed by the device, so precise that no late corrections were needed. "It's been wonderfully dull," Mr Manning said. The mission is designed to prove that exploring the solar system need not be impossibly expensive. Mars Pathfinder has cost a mere £90 million; it reached

Mars six months after launch. As well as putting America back on the surface of Mars for the first time since the Viking spacecraft landed there in the 1970s, Pathfinder was

due to establish a number of firsts: the first landing on a planet without orbiting it, the first time a remote-control buggy has explored the surface of a planet, and the first

time parachutes have been deployed at supersonic speed. The landing place was a 62-mile by 12-mile ellipse in the south-west part of the original target area. Geologists will be delighted if Pathfinder managed to hit this area because it would provide a view of what appears to be a 1,600ft island carved by an ancient flood.

That could provide hard evidence that Mars once had flowing water on its surface,

increasing the odds that life evolved there. "It looks very promising for us to be able to see some interesting horizon," Peter Kallenn, the lead navigation engineer, said. Pictures from another Mars-bound probe, Mars Global Surveyor, indicated that landing conditions were good.

Launched in December, Pathfinder was designed to shoot like a bullet through space at 16,600 mph and enter

VIEW FROM PATHFINDER

BBC2 is planning to transmit live pictures from the Pathfinder probe in Live From Mars between 8 and 10.30 this

morning. It is expected that images will also be available on the Internet at this site: www.jpl.nasa.gov/marsnews



The mission badge adopted by NASA

the Martian atmosphere at a 14.2-degree angle. Too steep and it would burn up from friction; too shallow and it would skip off the atmosphere into oblivion. On Friday, engineers said that it was headed for a 13.9-degree entry, making the trip a bit slower and hotter but within planners' expectations.

What happens after landing depends on how Pathfinder settles on the rocky surface. Scientists did not expect to get any pictures from the surface until early today.

Pathfinder ushers in a new era of exploring Earth's neighbours for traces of water — and perhaps life. Designed before claims were made of evidence of life in meteorites from Mars, it is not equipped to search for life, but it will be followed by spacecraft designed to do just that.

Today Mars is a lethal place for creatures that need water and oxygen to survive. It can be as cold as -130 C in winter and the atmosphere is poisonous — more than 95 per cent carbon dioxide.

Bouncing baby, page 5
Tim Haines, page 20

Ulster exodus
An exodus from Northern Ireland got under way as fears grew of clashes over the Drumree march. Page 2



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Bill of Rights to be in place by end of next year

By Frances Gibb

A BILL of Rights will be enacted by the end of next year, enabling people to seek justice in British rather than European courts for breaches of human rights.

A White Paper will be published in the autumn and a Bill soon after.

The Government's pledge to act swiftly to incorporate the European Convention on Human Rights into domestic law came yesterday from the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg, QC. Addressing a conference on the Bill of Rights at University College, London, he said it was critical that the Bill did not "disturb the supremacy of Parliament". Britain, he added, was almost alone among the major nations of Western Europe "in failing to give its citizens a direct means of asserting their Convention rights through their national courts".

He added: "This Government's position is that we should be leading in the development of human rights in Europe, not grudgingly driven to swallow the medi-

cine prescribed for us by the court in Strasbourg."

Lord Irvine is believed to favour a version of the New Zealand Bill of Rights, which gives no power to courts to override Acts of Parliament or strike them down because they breach human rights.

Other ministers in the Home Office, however, are believed to favour a version nearer to the more robust, Canadian model, which enables judges to strike down statutes that are inconsistent with human rights.

Lord Irvine appeared to rule out a special constitutional court as outlined in Labour's original consultation paper including lay people. Human rights cases should be part of the mainstream of the courts system, he said.

John Wadham, director of Liberty, the human rights group, said: "It seems that the Lord Chancellor is not going to go as far as we would like... he seems to think that Parliament should reign supreme, even when denying our human rights."

Cambridge observatory faces closure

By our science editor

BRITAIN'S oldest scientific institution, the Royal Greenwich Observatory in Cambridge, faces closure.

John Battle, the Science Minister, said yesterday that he had agreed to a plan prepared by the Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council to withdraw support from the observatory and concentrate staff at the Royal Observatory, Edinburgh.

The decision is no reflection on the quality of work done at Cambridge but with budgets not increasing, the council decided that it could no longer keep both centres open and support astronomers in universities.

The withdrawal of the support will almost certainly mean that the observatory will close, although the title may survive. It could be transferred back to the original Greenwich Observatory set up by Charles II more than 300 years ago.

The decision is likely to mean about 100 redundancies. Ken Pounds, the council's chief executive, said:

£2.4m saving, page 5

WPC disarms HIV man carrying deadly syringe

By Michael Horsnell

A POLICE officer put her life at risk when she disarmed an HIV-positive patient who threatened to stab hospital staff with a knife and a syringe containing his blood.

WPC Karen Fry, 30, said yesterday that she talked the man into laying down his weapons in a 15-minute confrontation as an armed police response unit in protective clothing stood by.

She said: "It is just a job. I was not scared at the time but afterwards my heart was pounding, especially when I thought about the 9 in knife and the syringe and what could have happened."

The incident, at the Churchill Hospital in Oxford on Thursday, happened after the 30-year-old in-patient snatched the syringe from a doctor who was about to sedate him and plunged it into his own arm, partly filling it with blood. The man then grabbed the knife from the hospital kitchen before running through the wards threatening to kill staff.

Staff isolated him in a corridor by clearing his path and locking doors. After he took a seat, WPC Fry volun-

teered to approach him. He was persuaded to abandon his weapons and surrender. Police arrested him before returning him to a ward. No charges are expected.

WPC Fry said: "We were slightly apprehensive but our first priority was to make sure no one was hurt. We made contact with the nursing staff who had already sealed off the area where the patient was."

"I thought that to start with the first thing that had to be done was to get the situation resolved as quickly as possible without using violence and

making sure no one was hurt."

The married officer said that she thought on the spot about what to say to the patient, telling him that his problems could be sorted out. "Basically I waffled and I think eventually he may have just got bored with the sound of my voice."

It was understood that the patient, who is in the infectious diseases ward, had inflicted head injuries on himself on Wednesday after throwing himself through a window.

Police said that a doctor had tried to sedate him after he became aggressive and started to cause damage.

Carl Powell, director of estates for the hospital, paid tribute to WPC Fry for her "exceptional response and sensitivity" to the incident and praised staff for protecting members of the public.

An award for WPC Fry's bravery is understood to be under consideration.

Mike Fleming, director of personnel at the Oxford Radcliffe Hospital Trust, said last night: "We are reviewing our security measures in the light of the incident."



Fry said her heart was pounding afterwards

Sporting euphoria vanishes

By John Goodbody
SPORTS NEWS
CORRESPONDENT

SHANE WARNE, Australia's masterly spin bowler, recaptured his best form to take five for 48 and put his country in a dominant position in the Third Test against England at Old Trafford yesterday.

As the English euphoria at recent results in cricket and tennis evaporated, Australia seized the initiative after being all out for 235 in their first innings. England, leading 1-0 in the six-match series, were 161 for eight at the close.

Warne, who lacked his usual venom in the first two Tests, ripped the heart out of England, at one stage taking three for one in 38 balls. England were 123 for eight before an unbeaten ninth wicket stand by Mark Ealham and Andy Caddick edged them towards Australia's total.

At Wimbledon, American Pete Sampras won his singles semi-final in straight sets against Todd Woodbridge, of Australia. The unseeded Woodbridge said: "Winners were flying all over the place. He just played fantastic."

Reports, pages 46 and 48

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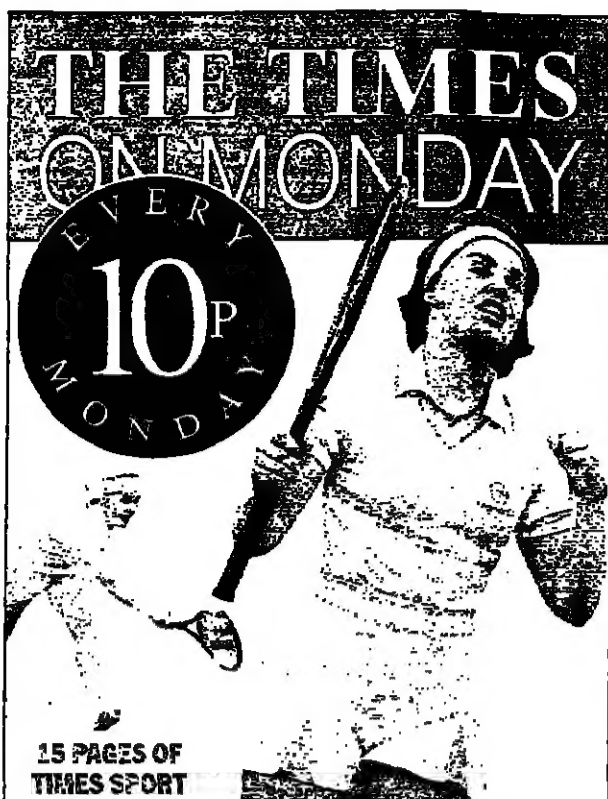


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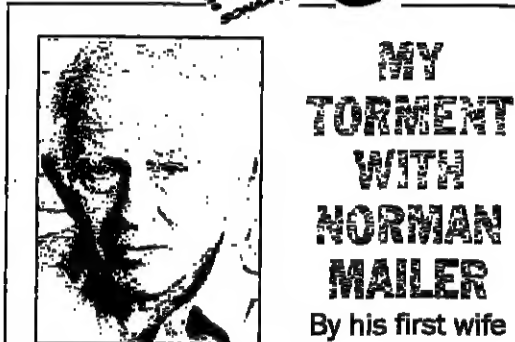
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Rob Andrew on the Lions' final test

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16-page supplement



Lang rules out return as MP

By Shirley English

IAN LANG, the former President of the Board of Trade who lost his seat at the last election, has announced he does not intend to stand for Parliament again.



Ian Lang: to make way for a younger candidate

Mr Lang, 57, told a meeting of the Galloway and Upper Nithsdale constituency party last night that he felt it was time to make way for a

younger candidate and he would therefore not seek re-nomination as their prospective MP.

He said: "Being an MP is a demanding job, especially in a large rural constituency. I will be over 60 by the time of the next general election and I feel that it is time to make way for a younger candidate to carry the Conservative flag into that election and win."

Commenting on the 20 years since he was first elected and later elected to serve the rural constituency, he said: "They have been years of immense fulfilment, during which I have developed a special bond with the people of the area and made many good friends. They have been years of tremendous progress for Britain and it has been good to see Galloway and Upper Nithsdale share in that progress."

His decision to stand down prompted speculation that he may be in line for a seat in the House of Lords in John Major's farewell honours list.



A Garvaghy Road resident finishes a nationalist mural 48 hours before the Orange march is due to begin.

Fear of parade clashes prompts Ulster exodus

By Nicholas Watt, Chief Ireland Correspondent

AN EXODUS was under way last night as fears grew that serious sectarian clashes will erupt across Northern Ireland over tomorrow's contentious Orange parade at Drumcree in Co. Armagh.

Belfast International Airport and Ulster's main ports reported a marked increase in passengers as hopes faded of an agreement between nationalists and Orangemen over the parade.

Catholics, many of whom were burnt out of their homes during Drumcree disturbances last July, headed across the Irish border.

Those remaining in Ulster stocked up on food, candles and camping gas stoves in case loyalists cut Northern Ireland's electricity supply if the march is blocked.

With 48 hours to go until the parade is due to start, a massive security operation swung into action in Portadown last night. Police and Army checkpoints were set up on the main approach roads while armed soldiers were on standby throughout the Province.

Mo Mowlam, the Northern

Ireland Secretary, admitted tensions were increasing in both communities. Dr Mowlam insisted she would press ahead with attempts to broker an eleventh-hour agreement between Orangemen and nationalists in Portadown. In a lengthy meeting with Orangemen she tried to persuade loyalists to accept a compromise drawn up by Bob McCartney, the United Kingdom Unionist MP for North Down. Under his "McCartney plan", the Government would uphold the Orangemen's right to march their traditional route from Drumcree along the Catholic Garvaghy Road into Portadown centre. As a gesture of goodwill the Orangemen would then agree not to march this year.

Hopes rose early yesterday that Orangemen would accept the plan when Robert Saulters, the Order's Grand Master, said: "For the sake of peace it seems to be the only option left." Within hours, however, he said Orangemen in Portadown did not agree to the idea. The Grand Master blamed Bertie Ahern for scup-



Mowlam: admitted tensions are increasing

pering any hope of agreement when the new Irish Prime Minister said in Belfast on Tuesday that the march should not be forced down the Garvaghy Road. Nationalists were also adamant last night that there would be "no Orange feet" on the street.

If no agreement is reached Dr Mowlam and the RUC will announce today whether the march will be restricted or forced down the Garvaghy Road. If it is restricted Ronnie

Flanagan, the RUC Chief Constable, will either reroute the parade or recommend to Dr Mowlam that she should ban it. Either would inflame loyalists. Alternatively, the march could be allowed down the Garvaghy Road. That would infuriate nationalists and trigger republican riots.

Serious loyalist violence erupted last year when Orangemen were banned from the Garvaghy Road. Police reversed that decision after a four-day stand-off with the loyalists, leading to massive nationalist violence in Belfast and Londonderry.

Dr Mowlam made clear last night that the outlook was bleak. In a brief statement, which she read out on the steps of Stormont Castle, she said: "I recognise tensions in both communities are increasing and people are in need of reassurance. We are continuing our efforts to find an accommodation that both communities can live with."

Moderate Orange leaders praised by Dr Mowlam for supporting the "McCartney plan" said they would work through the night to reach an agreement with Nationalists.

I'm backing Blair's Britain, says Caine

Michael Caine, right, has changed his mind about leaving Britain under a Labour Government. Caine told Tony Blair that he would live abroad if Labour imposed high taxes. But yesterday he said he had decided that the Prime Minister had the right ideas, and that "you cannot leave the poor behind".



Caine, 64, told LWT's *The London Programme*: "I had dinner with Tony Blair and I said if he was going to go with 85 per cent taxes again, I was going to leave the country again. I said, 'I'm not paying 85 per cent of my earnings, especially at my age. I've got to save up.'"

Caine's fortune has been estimated at up to £40 million. He spent several years in tax exile during the last Labour administration in the 1970s. Caine said Mr Blair would help Britain by finding "jobs for the burglars".

Hopes rise in BA conflict

The two industrial disputes threatening British Airways' flights inched towards settlement as hopes rose that the 1,400 members of the catering unit that BA wants to sell will accept a deal in a ballot on Tuesday. Delegates of the British Airlines Stewards and Stewardesses Association will meet at the weekend to decide whether to accept arbitration over the separate cabin crew dispute.

Cigarette firms in court

The first group legal action by lung cancer victims against tobacco companies in England cleared its first hurdle yesterday when a High Court judge, Mr Justice May, was appointed to hear the case. Forty-seven people are claiming damages of £50,000 each on the ground that the cigarette manufacturers Imperial Tobacco and Gallaher failed to limit the health risks to smokers.

Business school backed

A postal poll of Oxford dons endorsed plans for a £45 million business school by a five-to-one majority. The vote of 1,280 to 237 secures a £20 million donation from Waffie Said, the Syrian-born businessman, and ends a period of uncertainty after the original plans were rejected in November. Last month the academics' parliament approved the revised proposal by six to one.

Phone ban ruled out

Motorists will not be banned from using mobile telephones while driving, the Government decided yesterday. However, it has promised a campaign to warn drivers against the dangers of using telephones at the wheel. Alan Michael, the Home Office Minister, said that existing regulations enabling police to prosecute drivers who lose control of their vehicle were tough enough.

Rail action cancelled

Industrial action by train drivers working for Connex South Central, which covers destinations including Brighton, Portsmouth, Southampton, Guildford, Eastbourne and Hastings, has been called off. Aslef, the drivers' union, is recommending its members to accept an offer which includes the introduction of a 37-hour working week and changes in work practices.

Times cook honoured

Frances Bissell, *The Times* Cook, has been elected a full member of the Academie Culinaire de France's British chapter, becoming the first woman chef admitted to the organisation in either country. Mrs Bissell, while pre-eminently a cookery writer, has worked as a guest chef alongside several leading British chefs, including Herbert Berger at the Cafe Royal. *Magazine*, page 53

Last laugh for the Lada



The news that Lada cars are no longer to be exported to Britain has prompted a rush to snap up the final 1,000 models of the much-maligned car to go on sale, including the Lada 1200 (above). Luchka Motors International, the company that imported the Russian-built cars, said: "We expect to sell out over the weekend. With so few available, Ladas may well become a collector's item."

Sickness at work is all in the mind

By Alexandra Freen

SICK building syndrome, the workplace complaint blamed for causing headaches, depression, tiredness and flu, is more likely to be caused by bad management and low job satisfaction than a poor working environment, a conference heard yesterday.

Alexi Marmot, an architect, told the Royal College of Psychiatrists annual conference in Bournemouth that it was a myth that poor air conditioning, harsh fluorescent lighting and uncomfortable workstations made people ill, according to a survey of 4,100 civil servants working in 44 Whitehall buildings.

Locals fail to meet Dewar half way on Skye bridge

By Shirley English

A 50 per cent cut in how much local people are charged to cross the Skye bridge was announced by the Scottish Office yesterday, but instantly dismissed as "a sop" by angry islanders.

Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, halved the price of concessionary tickets for local people, taking a single car crossing down to £1.25. But the move failed to satisfy anti-toll protesters who pledged to continue their 15-month campaign of non-payment until the charges, the most expensive in Europe, are abolished completely.

Drew Millar, chairman of Skye and Kyle Against the

Tolls, known as Skat, said Mr Dewar's attempt to pacify islanders by meeting them half-way had missed the point of the no-toll campaign. "The crux of the matter is the damage to the tourist industry and the knock-on effect on the island's economy. Businesses are definitely quieter this season than in previous years, that means less money to go around," he said.

The package of cuts announced in Edinburgh will only affect regular users. Previously a book of ten concessionary tickets cost £25.10, or £2.51 per crossing. That will now be halved to £1.25. A 25 per cent reduction has been introduced for commercial vehicles, down to £18.95 per

crossing, and bus services, down to £11.45. But visitors will still have to pay the full charge of £5.40 during the high season. Myrna Scott-Moncrieff, general secretary of Skat, said the non-payment campaign would continue until the Government gave a firm commitment to abolish the tolls completely. Mr Dewar rejected this yesterday.

"We have taken the position of no tolls and we feel we have just reasons for that," she said. Since the bridge opened in October 1995 more than 500 people have refused to pay and now face criminal charges. Around 80 have been fined for non-payment at Dingwall Sheriff Court which is clogged until Christmas.

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Feathers fly over the owl of St Paul's

Experts clash on wisdom of caging cathedral's free spirit

By DAMIAN WHITWORTH



Paula snapped on its eyrie by the RSPCA inspector

THE escaped eagle owl that is devouring pigeons at St Paul's Cathedral was the subject of a heated debate yesterday. Should the bird be caught and put in a cage to end its two-year reign of terror above London's streets?

The predator, nicknamed Paula, stands 20in with a 5ft wingspan and has the capacity to kill a dog or small deer. An RSPCA officer who has been tracking the bird for two years caused dismay among fellow experts when he said that he would like to capture it. Inspector Lee Hopgood was winched up on a hydraulic platform to within a few feet of the bird as it perched on a ledge. He told Radio 4's *Today* programme that he had wanted to get it into a cage. "There's a very slim chance of catching it — I would have liked to have done," he said. The bird gave him a hard stare and flew off.

Sir Christopher Lever, an expert on the introduction of animals into the wild, said he had been shocked by talk of catching the owl. "I was rather concerned to hear that chap say he wanted to catch it and put it in a cage. Why the RSPCA wants to do that I don't know. It is doing no harm to anybody. It isn't injured, why not leave it in peace? It has been around for two years and hasn't yet killed a cat or a dog, so I think the likelihood of it doing so is extremely remote. It is killing pigeons and rats, which could be said to be beneficial."

Mr Hopgood believes that the bird, which has leather anklets that



Hopgood: bird would be difficult to catch

prove it was once in captivity, is the one that was spotted in Regent's Park about two years ago and made contact with Max, a male eagle owl, in London Zoo. It was also seen in Camden Parkway. "I would have hoped it was the same bird," he said. "I hope there are not any more flying around."

Simon Tonge, senior curator at London Zoo, said Max and the female owl had hooted at each other and this led the zoo to suspect the female of preying on its other birds. "We had a group of monogamous in a fox-proof enclosure but we found one dead on the other side of the zoo. Eagle owls are quite awesome things and have been known to kill eagles in their nests."

report a couple of years ago of a large bird of prey swooping down on a dog in Regent's Park but there was no evidence that it was the eagle owl. The birds, which are not native to Britain, have been known to kill dogs and roe deer on the Continent, but experts agree that they have to be very hungry to make such attacks.

The St Paul's owl was thought to be eating squirrels and waterfowl from parks but mainly picking off plump pigeons as they slept. "There's so much plentiful prey, it's on a plate," said Mr Hopgood. "It won't have the need to take anything bigger. It won't take birds in flight, but when they are roosting. They won't hear it coming, it's just 'bosh!' and there's lunch."

Mr Tonge said that there was no legal reason why a bird that had escaped from captivity should not be caught by someone but he echoed Sir Christopher's view that it was best to leave it alone.

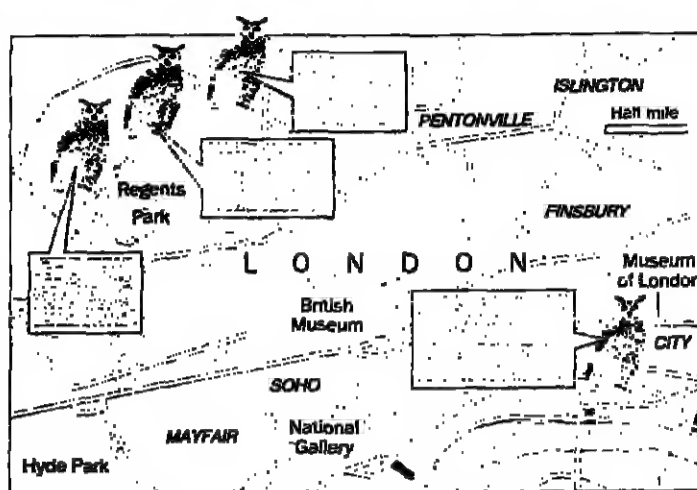
Last night Mr Hopgood conceded that their arguments had merit. "The bottom line is that it is not supposed to be there. But it would be very difficult to catch it. It is obviously coping quite well and it is not a threat to the public." He would continue to monitor the owl every two weeks and would try to catch it only if it was trapped or ill.

He may be in for a long-term relationship. Eagle owls can live to be 30. "It could be around for 20-odd years," he said.

Feather report, Weekend page 13



Max, the London Zoo owl believed to have met Paula



Burglar was expert 'worthy of part on Antiques Roadshow'

By LIN JENKINS

A BURGLAR with a knowledge of antiques that could have earned him a place as an expert on *Antiques Roadshow* led a gang that carried out more than 150 burglaries on country houses, a court was told yesterday.

Nick Stock, planned the burglaries, had telephone wires cut and burglar alarms disabled, and then sent in his teams of burglars. They stole goods worth more than £500,000 including silverware, paintings, furniture, a car and a safe.

Stephen Farish, for the prosecution, told Winchester Crown Court: "His victims included judges, knights, titled ladies, a vice-admiral and a lady said by one of the gang to be related to the Queen. But this was not because he was some sort of Robin Hood figure, far from it. He was wholly indifferent to the age and status of his victims. There was nothing romantic about him."

He said Stock was ruthless, violent and sometimes sadis-

tic. He was caught when an accomplice became fearful for his own life and asked police for protection.

Stock, 33, of Fareham, Hampshire, pleaded guilty to three charges of conspiracy to burglar and will be sentenced at the end of the trial of nine others alleged to have been involved.

Mr Parish said Stock would recommitte during daylight, studying items and dismissing them if he thought they were not genuine.

He was an expert. He could probably star in *The Antiques Road Show*. Stock did not care if people were in or out when he burgled their homes. He got people to cut the telephone or burglar alarm wires and waited to see if doing this alerted the local police. Sometimes he waited until people were at home, because they did not usually switch their burglar alarms on while inside.

Stock used threats and intimidation, sometimes to get people to commit the burglary

for him, rarely entering the houses himself. He directed his teams from near by and afterwards would tell them to hide the goods, collecting them later.

Many times he was stopped in a car late at night in the area where a burglary had been committed, Mr Parish said. "But there was nothing in the car and nothing to connect him with the burglary so they had to let him go. He considered himself invulnerable and above the law, and for something like five years he was."

The nine other men, who deny burglary and conspiracy to burglar, are: Anthony Hensman, 24, of Gosport; Mark Jenkins, 30, of Gosport; Wayne Law, 32, of Cwmndun; Carmarthen; Darren Nicholas, 22, of Crookhorn; Karl West, 27, of Portsmouth; Kevin Wilcox, 26, of Lee-on-Solent; Richard Bateman, 32, of Fareham; Dean Parr, 30, of Fareham; and Michael Pearce, 38, of Salisbury Green.

The trial continues.



The Quarry Men in 1957: McCartney right of the mike and Lennon to its left

Band that gave birth to Beatles plays again

By CAROL MIDDLEY, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

THE Quarry Men, the little-known Liverpool band whose performance at a fete helped to give rise to The Beatles, is reforming for one day today to commemorate the first meeting of John Lennon and Paul McCartney.

Forty years ago tomorrow — July 6, 1957 — they met at the Woolton village fete, Liverpool, where the entertainment included the Band Of The Cheshire Yeomanry and the City of Liverpool Police Dogs. McCartney, then 15, saw Lennon, 16, playing guitar in the Quarry Men skiffle

group and was impressed by his voice. They struck up an instant friendship and formed the Beatles. But the rest of the line-up went their separate ways and never played together again.

Tonight the former members of the Quarry Men, now in their fifties, will perform at the same venue, St Peter's Church, Woolton. Yesterday Colin Hanton, 58, the original drummer, who now runs an upholstery business, said: "To be honest, I was never really a very good drummer all those years ago, and I haven't improved since."

The rest of the band are Pete Shotton on washboard, Rod Davis, banjo, Eric Griffiths, guitar, and Len Garry, tea-chest bass.

In an interview to mark the reunion, Sir Paul McCartney said of that first encounter with Lennon: "I can remember him now, singing in a kind of checked shirt, this guy with the slightly curly hair. I thought, 'He looks good. I wouldn't mind being in a group with him.'"

In a few days they had met again to play together and their career as a partnership began.

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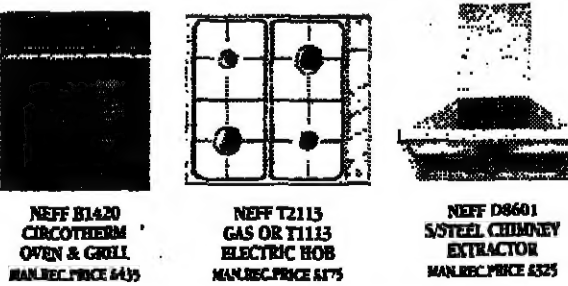


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Paul Esslemont as he left the Court of Appeal yesterday. He wept in the dock when told he would be set free

Conviction for killing boy, 3, ruled unsafe

BY RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

A MAN walked free from court yesterday after judges ruled that his conviction for killing a three-year-old boy was unsafe. Paul Esslemont, now 21, wept in the dock as the Court of Appeal said that in the light of new evidence his manslaughter conviction could not be upheld.

Mr Esslemont was convicted after the prosecution said that he had half-strangled Carl Kennedy, who lived near him at Willenhall in Coventry, with the child's football shirt, and then hit him 15 times in the face with a golf club. He was acquitted of murder in May 1993 but found guilty of manslaughter by a majority of 10-2 and sentenced to eight years' detention.

Yesterday after a tearful reunion with his family, he said: "I am very relieved by the judgment. It's been an enormous strain on me, my family and friends. I would like to thank them and my legal team for believing in my innocence."

Mr Esslemont said that his

life inside jail had involved "a lot of hassle at the start. There were a few physical assaults which weren't too bad, but they still had an effect on me and got me quite depressed. But there were some prison officers who helped me a lot. They were very good to me."

His first appeal was dismissed in March 1994 but an investigation by BBC Television's *Rough Justice* disclosed new evidence which was presented to Michael Howard, the then Home Secretary. He referred the case back to the Court of Appeal.

Mr Esslemont, who was of good character and finishing his GCSEs, maintained his innocence throughout his trial at Birmingham Crown Court. He said that he had been playing with a golf club and golf ball on a recreation ground when Carl asked if he could join in.

Mr Esslemont said he sent him away, later helping with the search for the missing boy and phoning the police. Blood traces found on the club and



Carl Kennedy: police will not reopen case

on his training shoes might have been deposited there when he walked through grass spattered with the dead boy's blood, he claimed.

At his trial a Home Office pathologist said that all Carl's injuries could have been inflicted with the golf club, but fresh evidence cast doubt on that. Professor Bernard Knight, a pathologist, said some injuries were too sharply lacerated to have been caused by a very blunt instrument.

Lord Justice Leggatt said as it was now accepted that all of the injuries could not have been caused by the club, either another weapon would have had to be used, or all the injuries were inflicted with another weapon.

"Since to cause the injuries, an assailant would have had to hold the golf club in both hands to prevent it twisting, he could not have held a second weapon at the same time. Yet all the injuries were inflicted from approximately the same position. That militates against two weapons, and indeed two killers. So it now seems probable that the weapon used was not the golf club."

He added that new experiments that attributed the

blood stains to walking and flicking the golf club through blood-stained grass did not establish a "very compelling account" but did afford a "possible explanation".

The judges said that Mr Esslemont would have had only 15 minutes at the most to carry out the killing and go back to his home, before retrieving the golf ball that he had borrowed from a neighbour.

Having left the club in the kitchen, when, according to the Crown he cleaned it, he then went back out to chat with the neighbour who was sitting on the doorstep with Mr Esslemont's stepmother.

"Yet there is no evidence that anybody saw anything amiss, either in his manner or in the way of blood on the appellant himself or on his clothing or golf club," Lord Justice Leggatt said.

He added: "Because no pathologist was available to the defence who was prepared to contradict the Crown's evidence about how Carl's injuries were caused, the jury had no option but to assume that they could all have been caused by the appellant's golf club."

West Midlands Police said that they had no plans to reopen the case.

Outside court, Mr Esslemont's father Martin, 46, said: "I want to know why it has taken so long. They had this evidence two years ago."

Rough Justice had screened its programme revealing the evidence in May 1995. He added: "I am very pleased. It has been a long time getting to this stage."

The BBC programme has recently broadcast its twenty-fifth case. Nine prisoners have been released after being featured, and three other cases are being considered by the Criminal Cases Review Commission.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

IRA man allowed police bail

A self-confessed IRA man arrested at the Old Bailey after being acquitted of plotting to blow up electricity substations was released on police bail yesterday.

During the trial of eight men accused of plotting the bombing last year, Martin Murphy, 39, told the court he had come to England last July to give other IRA men a written message. He denied knowing its contents and said he had no involvement in explosives. He also denied being a senior IRA member.

Pub thief freed

Norman Wright, 49, a pub landlord from Selston, Nottinghamshire, who admitted stealing £2,500 from a Drumble collection, has been given a four-month suspended sentence by Mansfield magistrates because reports said he might attempt suicide in prison.

West brother held

Graham Letts, 40, brother of Rosemary West, the mass murderer, was jailed for 12 months yesterday at Bristol Crown Court for making a hoax bomb call. Letts, of Gloucester, admitted saying that a bomb was at the Beach Hotel in Weston-super-Mare on New Year's day.

Policeman jailed

PC David Keyte, 42, who illegally obtained the names, addresses and sometimes previous convictions of 200 car owners, was jailed for two years by Southwark Crown Court in London. He worked with a former colleague and a private detective to access the police national computer.

Salmonella rise

The number of confirmed cases in the latest salmonella food poisoning outbreak has risen to 48, an increase of 22 cases in the Borders over the previous 24 hours. A further 16 are believed to be infected but are awaiting test results. Most of those affected live in St Boswells.

Mad cat attack

A pet Persian cat suspected by vets of having animal schizophrenia was put down after attacking June Bates, 61, of Langley, Berkshire, and her daughter, Catherine Macleish, 21, who suffered 90 cuts and scratches. Nurses at first thought the pair had been in a car crash.

Six years for car thief who killed girl

BY A STAFF REPORTER

A DRUNKEN car thief who killed a schoolgirl as she played outside her home was yesterday ordered to be detained for six years. The 17-year-old driver hit Teleri West, 9, when the car mounted the pavement at 60mph.

A court was told that the teenager had drunk eight pints of strong lager before getting into the Vauxhall Nova. Keith Thomas, for the prosecution, said that after the accident the youth staggered from the car and dropped a can of cider on the road. Neighbours heard him sobbing: "Have I hit anyone? I'm going to get life. It's murder. The car is stolen."

Cardiff Crown Court was told that the youth, who cannot be named for legal reasons, had twice the legal limit of alcohol in his blood. He rounded a corner on the wrong side of the road before mounting the pavement and hitting the girl, who was playing with her friend Sean Rogers, 14, outside her home in Morganstown, near Cardiff.

Mr Thomas told the court: "The car collided with both children and Teleri was thrown high into the air by the impact. She landed on the road and the Nova drove over her and trapped her beneath it." Sean had leg and pelvic injuries.

After the case Teleri's father, Simon Adams, criticised the length of the sentence: "He will serve only four of those six years but Teleri has been taken from us forever. It's an absolute disgrace."

The teenager, from Cardiff, admitted causing death by dangerous driving, aggravated vehicle-taking and driving while disqualified. His lawyer, Stephen Hopkins, told the court: "He showed immediate remorse and says he will never drive again. He comes from a respectable family who will do all they can to help him."

Sentencing the youth to six years in a young offenders' institution, Judge Michael Gibbon, QC, said: "This is a sad and unfortunate tragedy. It has ruined many lives and I extend my sympathy to both families."



The first Royal Observatory at Greenwich was set up in 1675 by Charles II. Now it may revert to its original title

Closing eye on the sky will save £2m a year

Observatory decision is logical end to 15-year debate, reports Nigel Hawkes

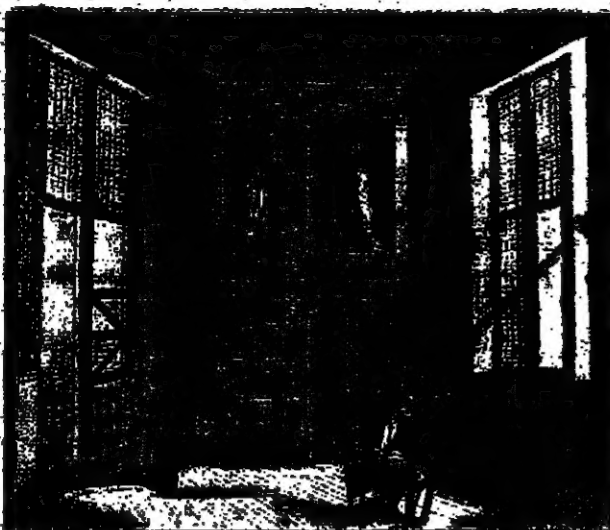
THE closure of the Royal Greenwich Observatory at Cambridge, announced yesterday by John Birt, the Science Minister, marks the end of 15 years of argument and indecision.

Up to 100 people will lose their jobs when the work of supporting British telescopes is concentrated at the Royal Observatory, Edinburgh. The savings — £2.4 million a year over the next four years, and at least £4 million a year thereafter — will be used to support research in astronomy at British universities.

Despite its name, the institution being closed is neither an observatory nor is it at Greenwich. It is a modern office building, completed seven years ago, which houses 115 staff. The telescopes they use are in Las Palmas in the Canary Islands, Hawaii, and Australia.

The RGO started its life at Greenwich, but polluted skies dictated a move, first to Herstmonceux in Sussex and then, in 1990, to Cambridge. But the RGO had a counterpart in Scotland, the Royal Observatory, Edinburgh, where about 100 staff work, and since 1992 there have been proposals to save money by merging the two organisations.

The Particle, Physics, and Astronomy Research Council says that the case for copen-



Starwatchers working at Greenwich under the first Astronomer Royal mapped the sky to aid navigation

trating on one site is very strong, and has been recommended by every review. Until now the decision has been dodged. "The case for withdrawing support from the RGO is compelling, the logic is overwhelming, and the result will be better science, better astronomy," says Peter Williams, chairman of PPARC.

Both he and Professor Ken Foulds, its chief executive, said that they greatly regretted the need for redundancies but without change, PPARC

would not be able to go on supporting 31 university groups with grants for astronomy. But he explained that PPARC cannot actually close the RGO, because of its royal title. The royal connection meant PPARC had to gain the approval of the Science Minister John Birt to its plans. In a written parliamentary answer yesterday, the minister said that combining the work of Greenwich and Edinburgh in a new UK Astronomy Technology Centre in Edinburgh would better reflect the fact

that the two Royal Observatories were now observatories in name only.

Neil Parker, deputy director of the RGO, said that the decision was "disappointing, to say the least". He said that the RGO had better technology, was better suited to future needs for astronomy, and had a better record than Edinburgh.

It is quite possible that the title of RGO will now be bestowed elsewhere, perhaps back to the original Greenwich Observatory — now known as the Old Royal Observatory — where it started more than 300 years ago. The observatory was founded in 1675, on the orders of Charles II, its job, and that of John Flamsteed, the first Astronomer Royal, was to map the heavens to help ships navigate.

The building was designed by Sir Christopher Wren, and built at a cost of £520 9s 1d, defrayed by selling off 690 barrels of Royal gunpowder. In the 19th century the buildings were adapted by the seventh Astronomer Royal, Sir George Airy. It played a major role in the development of timekeeping and navigation, its place in history ensured by the agreement in 1884 that the zero meridian of longitude should be the Greenwich Meridian.

AIRBAGS ENSURE PATHFINDER HAS A CUSHIONED LANDING

Scientists' bouncing baby safe on Mars

By Nigel Hawkes

MARS Pathfinder used ingenious but untried techniques for landing on the red planet. When it hit the Martian surface, it was designed to bounce several times, wrapped in airbags to break its fall.

The descent was timed to last for 4½ minutes but was to be followed by hours of waiting before scientists could confirm that it had landed safely. Pathfinder hit Mars's thin atmosphere at 16,600mph. Two minutes before landing, a huge parachute was deployed and 20 seconds later the heat shield was jettisoned.

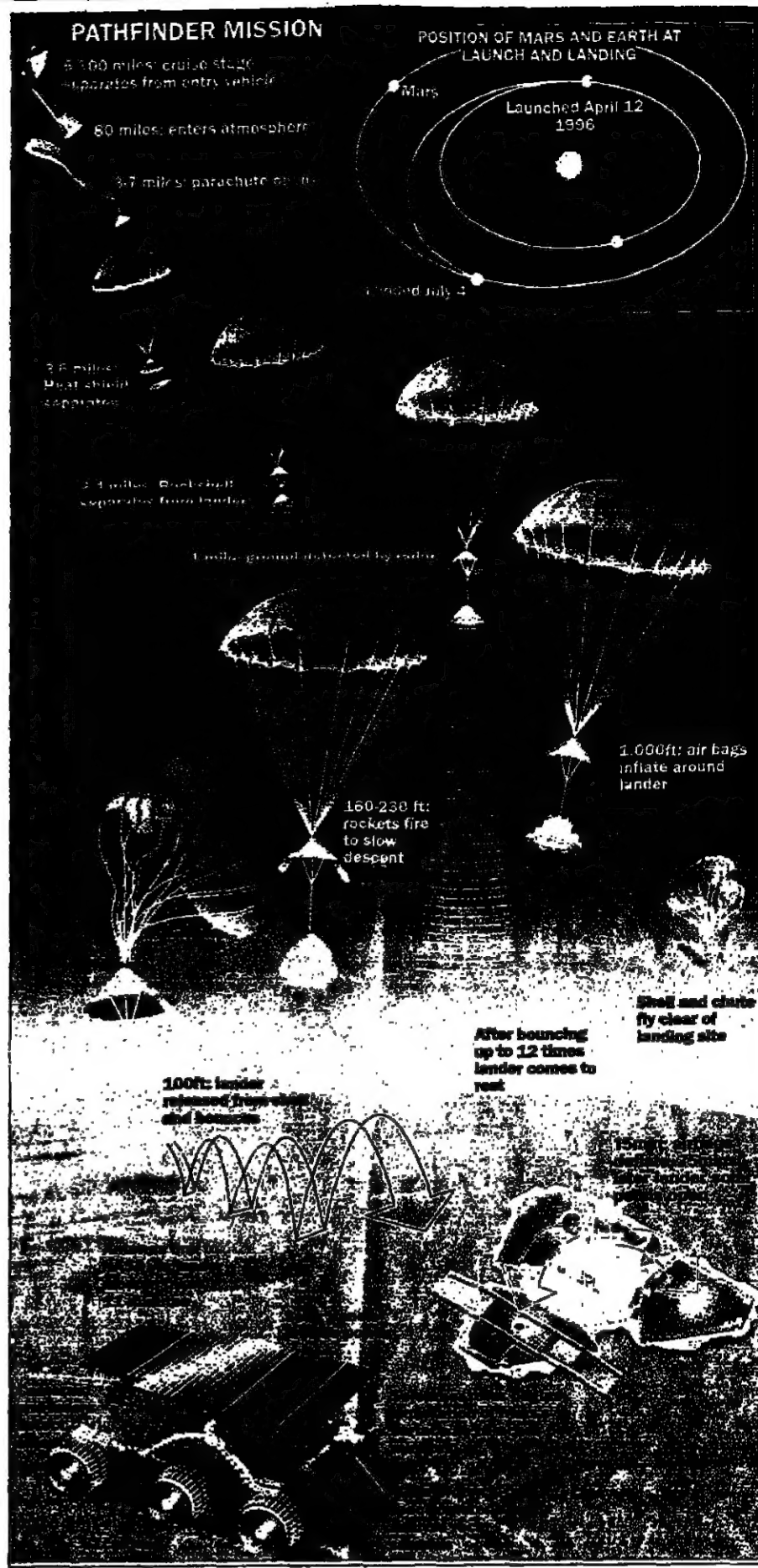
As the spacecraft slowed, four protective airbags, each about 19ft across, were due to inflate, turning the spacecraft into a bunch of balloons. Four retro-rockets fired for a couple of seconds to bring Pathfinder to a virtual halt.

The spacecraft fell the last few feet to the surface, protected by the airbags. Their role complete, the airbags deflated and retracted. In the final step, the spacecraft's petal-like sides opened to ensure that it was the right way up, allowing the rover vehicle to trundle out of its hold and begin exploring.

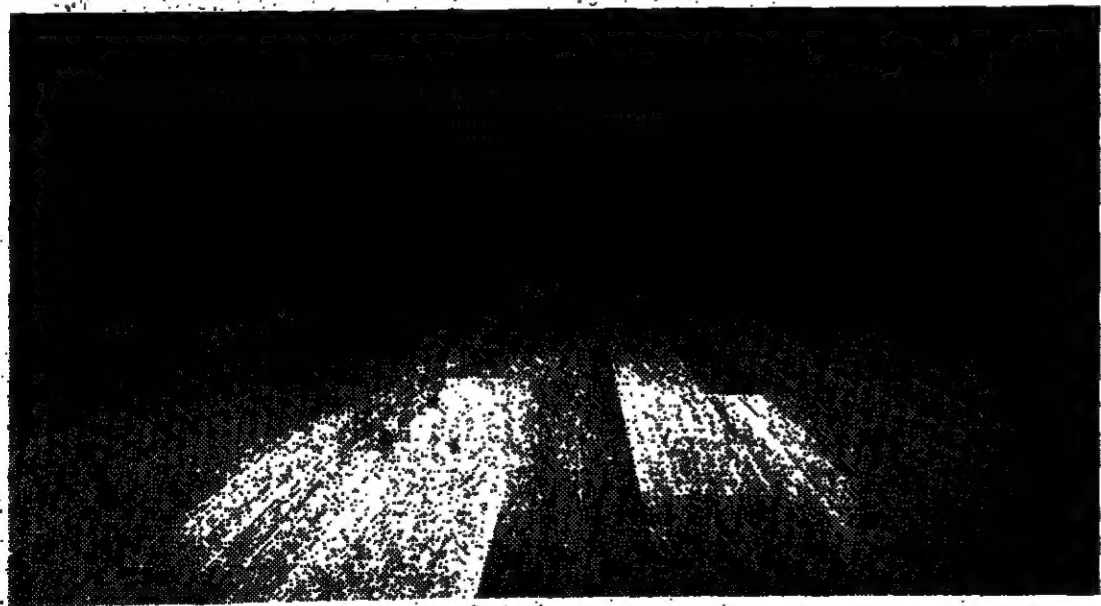
The rover, called Sojourner, is the first wheeled vehicle to move on the Martian surface, driven remotely by mission controllers at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California.

The landing section will send back three-dimensional images of the Martian surface, so that the controllers will be able to guide Sojourner across the surface at only one or two inches per second.

The vehicle will take colour pictures to identify the rock and soil minerals it encounters. Pathfinder will send back pictures and data on the atmosphere and weather.



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Probation staff powerless to hold paedophile

By DANIEL MCGRORY

PROBATION officers admitted last night that they are powerless to detain a convicted paedophile who threatened to attack again after he was found after a 24-hour hunt by police.

Graham Seddon, 43, who has said he will attack the first child he finds, moved to south London after neighbours in Liverpool hounded him out of the bail hostel where he had been staying.

Seddon, also known as Graham Stridgen, had been missing from his temporary accommodation in Brimston. He gave himself up to probation staff after police found him trying to draw his benefit at a DSS office in central London.

Probation officers said last night that they had moved him out of the capital but were having difficulty finding a hostel willing to take him after the public threats to attack again. "We cannot legally hold on to him and now he is the

subject of controversy again nowhere wants responsibility for him," a source for the Probation Service said.

"For the moment he is with us voluntarily but if he wants to go off on his own we nor the police can stop him unless he commits another offence."

Seddon threatened to rape another child immediately after his release from prison in March after serving six years of a ten-year sentence for assaulting a girl aged ten.

He was detained by police weeks later when he was seen stalking children in Liverpool, carrying a teddy bear, toys and colouring pencils.

Seddon has agreed to meet Inner London probation staff, who refused to say last night where they were trying to find him accommodation. "He felt not stay in London and his desire is that no one knows where he goes next," the probation source said.

Seddon has openly con-

fessed to his probation officers that because of his uncontrollable sexual urges he still regards himself as a danger.

A psychiatrist in Lancashire who examined Seddon ruled that his condition was not medically treatable and did not fit the criteria for admission to a hospital.

A senior figure in the Greater Manchester probation service who dealt with Seddon's case said: "As a parent I can understand the public disquiet about this man being on the loose. He believes he is a danger to children but as the law stands there is nothing the Probation Service can do about forcibly detaining him. There needs to be a further change in law so that such sex offenders can be given a supervision order on a prolonged basis so that we can both monitor him and impose some control on his whereabouts."

Seddon will not be included on the Home Office register of paedophiles to be introduced in the autumn as he has served his prison sentence. Under legislation introduced by the previous government, convicted sex offenders will need to register their address when they leave jail.

"This idea needs to be extended to include the likes of Seddon," the probation source said.

The mother who took out an injunction this week against Seddon to prevent him contacting her children was furious when told he had absconded. Lorraine Southern, a mother of three, who campaigns on behalf of a group called People Power said: "I am frightened because somebody's child is going to come to harm with this man on the loose."

Greater Manchester probation service said yesterday: "We and other agencies put a great deal of effort in making suitable arrangements for this man, including finding him accommodation and offering other support. We are very disappointed he has chosen not to take up these services. However, he is under no statutory supervision and as the law stands, he is free to make his own choices."



Graham Seddon, has threatened to attack the first child that he finds

Judge orders magazine to return lottery pay documents

By CAROL MIDDLEY, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

A HIGH COURT judge yesterday ordered a magazine editor to hand back leaked documents which revealed the "fat cat" bonuses of Camelot directors and provoked a national outcry.

Marketing Week carried an article in May which disclosed that some directors had received increases and bonuses of up to 90 per cent, prompting the intervention of the Prime Minister and Chris Smith, the Heritage Secretary. Camelot, the National Lottery operator, took legal action against the magazine and began an immediate inquiry, employing security staff to interview employees to identify the "highly-placed" mole.

Mr Justice Maurice Kay ordered the return of the draft papers "in the interests of justice" after Camelot lawyers argued the company needed them to pinpoint the culprit. He said that an employee had acted in breach of contractual duties and the accounts were stolen. Camelot had a substantial interest in protecting its integrity and the source had leaked the information "unlawfully and in all probability criminally".

The judge said journalistic sources were now protected by law unless disclosure was necessary in the interests of justice or national security. In his judgment he said: "I am satisfied that it is necessary here, in the interests of justice, to override the high public importance accorded to the protection of sources."

"The publication of the article in Marketing Week led to considerable criticism of the plaintiff and its directors." He said it was well known that the article "incurred the wrath of

the Government". Camelot was forced to hold meetings with the Heritage Secretary "amid a blaze of unwelcome publicity" which resulted in the directors agreeing to give some of their October bonuses to charity.

Peter Murphy, financial director of Camelot, had told the court that an internal inquiry had failed to find the source but it was known to be a person working at their offices.

He said: "Until the culprit is identified and removed, suspicions will impede effective management."

Stuart Smith, editor of Marketing Week, yesterday said he would appeal against the decision because the case was important to press freedom.

"We will exhaust all the legal remedies," he said. "Camelot can not even be certain that the return of these documents would identify the mole. We shall be protecting what is a very valuable source. This was a case with significant implications for press freedom. It pitted corporate privilege against the confidentiality of journalistic sources and unfortunately corporate privilege has won the legal skirmish."

But it is only a skirmish. Marketing Week fully intends to win the battle. The documents will not be released to Camelot as we are going to appeal against this judgment."

A Camelot spokeswoman said: "We fully support the freedom of the press but this was not an issue here. This was a highly sensitive document which was leaked and it is important to us for internal security reasons."

Chemists curb sale of vitamin

By IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

HIGH-DOSE vitamin B6 tablets are being taken off chemists' shelves and new legislation will control levels of it in dietary supplements as a result of advice from the independent Food Advisory Committee that guides the Government on food safety.

The committee has found that taken at high levels over a prolonged period the vitamin may cause nerve damage leading to symptoms such as pins and needles, numbness and

clumsiness. Jeff Rooker, the Food Safety Minister, decided to issue a warning about taking too much of it on the advice of the committee. The Royal Pharmaceutical Society has told the 12,500 chemists shops in Britain not to sell it without first warning customers of possible side effects.

"Vitamin B6 is an essential component of people's diets, but, like many things, too much can be harmful," Mr Rooker said.

Dolphin, for a new lease of life in the bathroom



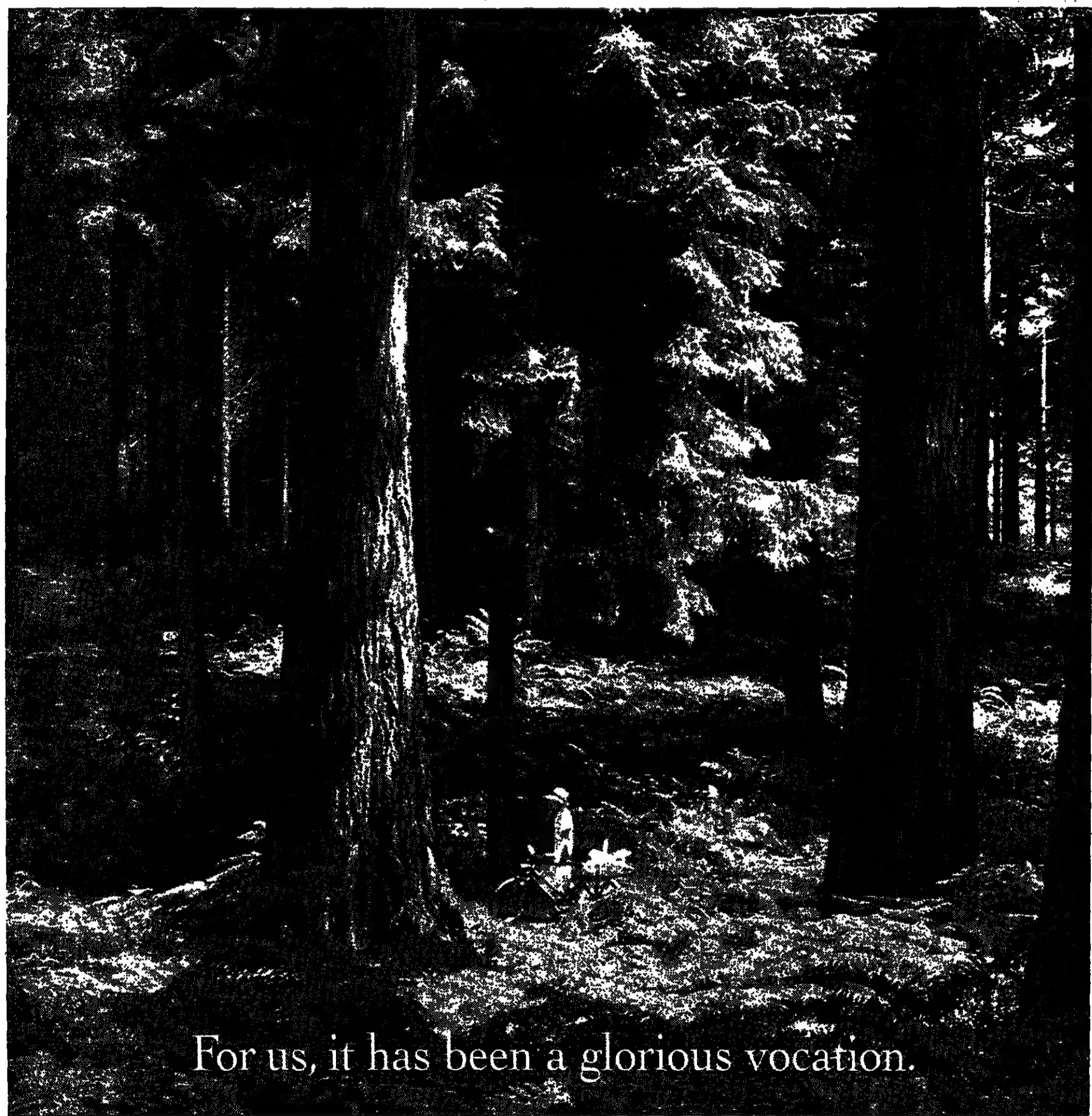
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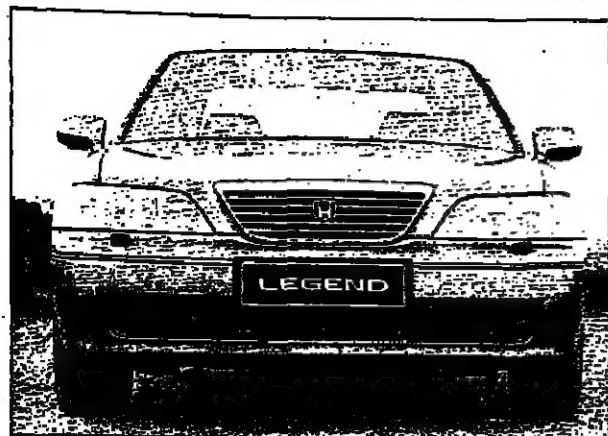
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Honda's Legend: a fine car with no great reputation

Unknown Legend

THE HONDA Legend's low, almost invisible profile, does such a thoroughly good car a disservice, writes Vaughan Freeman.

The 3.2-litre V6 from 1991 is under-rated, and the newer 3.5-litre model from 1993 suffered a lack of publicity reports CAP Black Book.

The Legend has always had difficulties in the UK establishing itself an image, let alone any status.

The Legend is worth considering as executive transport because it is very quiet, hugely comfortable, has high equipment levels and total reliability and superb build.

Best buy is an early coupe, and expect to pay £14,500 to £15,000 for a 1992 K-reg model, which is not bad for a car that cost almost twice that much when brand new.

FORECOURT

FORD'S Sierra Cosworth is probably the cheapest 150mph car on sale.

Best buy is the 1991 H-reg or 1992 G-reg Cosworth Sapphire, which should sell at anything up to £11,000 with low to average mileage.

All Cosworths should though come with a public health and finance warning. Make sure any Cosworth you are considering comes with a full service history, and scrutinise anything offered as proof of ownership with great care and caution, especially invoices and receipts.

The Cosworth is the car loved by thieves, and investing £30 or so in a computer history check on a Cosworth is money well spent.

People-mover that's a real car

ROADTEST

Most motorists seeking a seven-seater are drawn to the "people-mover" or multi-purpose vehicle, writes Alan Capps. These cars have been the subject of such a publicity blitz that you might be forgiven for thinking there was no alternative if you need seven seats.

But there is, and if, like me, you'd rather drive in a car than on a platform, it's an ideal solution: the seven-seater estate. There are not many on the market, but the Peugeot 406 Family Estate must have a strong claim to being the best — it is after all based on a car acknowledged as the leader in its class.

The snag with most people-movers is the trade-off between the number of passengers and the amount of luggage space. With a full load in most such vehicles, luggage space is at a premium. If you're carrying fewer than seven passengers it can be increased by means of taking out two or three seats completely. But this poses two further problems, the removal of seats is often a cumbersome and, for all but superfit and superstrong people, a taxing procedure. Then once you've got the seats out you've got to store them somewhere, which for anyone without a garage can be an even greater hurdle.

I have a theory that most people movers are bought not by parents but by children. They love these vehicles because of the high seating position. Some drivers might also find the extra view over traffic appealing. But while the best MPVs are genuinely versatile vehicles, the worst are little short of vans with windows, and I'd rather drive a car anyway.

The great virtue of the 406 Family Estate is the way that it squares that circle: not only is it a car renowned for its performance, handling and level of comfort, but if you want it to be, it becomes with a minimum of effort a seven-seater with at least as much luggage space remaining as you can find in most MPVs.

As a normal five-seater, there is a generous load space. If you want seven seats all you have to do is pull up two cleverly constructed rear-facing seats, complete with seat belts, which fold out of the load-area floor. Although at first sight the extra seats and their tubular construction look a little spartan, for children they proved perfectly comfortable even when stuck for an hour in a west London traffic jam. The fact that they face rearwards seemed to appeal to the independent urges of the older children.

What this design acknowledges is that people like me who want cars with seven seats only want to use all seven seats on comparatively few occasions. To have such versatility without the necessity for humping seats around is a real asset.

But it's far from being the only asset. In what is arguably the most competitive section of the car market, the Peugeot 406 has established an enviable reputation as "a driver's car". Allied to the striking good looks of the 406 range, a wide choice of engines and excellent economy, the Family Estate adds up to a very appealing package.



Family Estate enjoys good looks and a reputation as a driver's car

PEUGEOT 406 ESTATE

Engines: 1.8, 2.0, 2-litre turbo or 3-litre V6 petrol, 1.9 and 2.1-litre turbo-diesel.

Performance: (1.8-litre petrol) max speed 115mph, 0-62mph in 11.4 seconds.

Economy: (1.8-litre petrol) Urban cycle 22.7mpg, extra-urban 40.3mpg, combined cycle 31.4mpg.

Equipment: (1.8L) Driver and passenger airbags, keypad immobiliser, remote locking, four-speaker RDS radio cassette.

Price: from £15,440 on the road.

USED CAR BRIEF



TOYOTA Camry The Camry, introduced in 1983, became the Carina E four years later as production of the new look version began in Britain. Available as a four-door saloon, five-door hatchback, and estate, the Carina engine range includes 1.6, 1.8 and 2-litre petrols as well as 2-litre diesel and turbo diesels. Changes in 1995 saw the introduction of the "lean burn" engines, made in Wales, which offer exceptional fuel economy.

- GOOD NEWS:** The Camry's 1.8-litre engine, especially the 1.8i, can get away with a 10per cent rate of depreciation, writes Vaughan Freeman. The Camry's 1.8i is a 10per cent rate of depreciation, writes Vaughan Freeman. The Camry's 1.8i is a 10per cent rate of depreciation, writes Vaughan Freeman.
- BAD NEWS:** The engines, especially the 1.8i, can get away with a 10per cent rate of depreciation, writes Vaughan Freeman. The Camry's 1.8i is a 10per cent rate of depreciation, writes Vaughan Freeman.
- REPAIRS:** The Camry's 1.8i is a 10per cent rate of depreciation, writes Vaughan Freeman. The Camry's 1.8i is a 10per cent rate of depreciation, writes Vaughan Freeman.
- SALES:** The Camry's 1.8i is a 10per cent rate of depreciation, writes Vaughan Freeman. The Camry's 1.8i is a 10per cent rate of depreciation, writes Vaughan Freeman.
- PRICES:** Expect to pay £2,500 to £3,500 for a pre-1992 Camry; £3,500 to £4,500 for a 1992-1993 Camry; £4,500 to £5,500 for a 1994-1995 Camry.

Ferodo's bike-record braker

THE COMPANY that claims the title of "world's first brake manufacturer" is celebrating its centenary this year by sponsoring an attempt on the British land-speed record for a motorcycle.

Ferodo, which made the first brake blocks for early cars and was producing brakes for London Underground trains by 1907, is backing an attempt on the record by pupils of Beauchamps School in Essex which will take place at Elvington airfield in Yorkshire on the July 19. The record



Used-car buyers beware

SPARE PARTS

WITH THE rush for R-registration cars from August 1 expected to release a flood of trade-ins on to the second-hand market, buyers of used cars are being advised to protect their vehicles from theft.

Buyers of used models may need to take action to benefit from security measures that are already installed, says Retaingroup, which runs the National Vehicle Security Register backed by ten leading makers and more than 1,000 motor dealers. The NVSR system means

that the car's security code and Retaingroup's 24-hour checkline number is permanently etched on to the window. Ownership details are kept on a secure database.

This acts as a deterrent for thieves and as a means of verifying ownership, but anyone buying such a car needs to inform Retaingroup to maintain this protection. Owners can register their vehicles for a one-off fee of £11 by calling the company on 0181-871 1333. "More than half a million vehicles are stolen in the UK every year and 60 per cent of these are never recovered," says Wendy Rowe, managing director of Retaingroup.

<p>FERRARI WANTED</p> <p>200/248/288 All models available. Contact 0833 797979 / 0830</p> <p>FIAT</p> <p>MASSIVE Savings on Brand New Fiat. See Sales Rep. All models. Private buyers only. 01480 813200</p> <p>FORD</p> <p>All Ford cars monthly new from £199. See Sales Rep. All models. Private buyers only. 01480 813200</p> <p>96 P.2.0</p> <p>GLX 7 seater, Met Blue, Air Con, Roof Racks, 18,000 Miles, Warranty, Immaculate.</p> <p>£16,995.00</p> <p>Tel: 01442 879701</p> <p>0467 212753</p>	<p>FORD</p> <p>APPROXIMATELY 30 buyers in the UK are looking for a Ford. See Sales Rep. All models. Private buyers only. 01480 813200</p> <p>FOUR WHEEL DRIVE WANTED</p> <p>We are keen to purchase the very best low mileage four wheel drive vehicles. For an enthusiastic response, please telephone Jeremy Mallett on 01480 813200 or 0800 408001</p> <p>Hallamshire</p> <p>100% Finance</p>	<p>HONDA</p> <p>HONDA HONDA HONDA</p> <p>New 97/98 RD Specification. Fantastic August delivery available. Call 01703 472028</p> <p>01703 472028</p> <p>or 07000 1 EUROCAR</p> <p>Lease Hire Quotations Available</p> <p>Stratstone</p> <p>100% Finance</p>	<p>CIVIC</p> <p>CRX/ESIA Targa, L reg, red, auto, immac, FSH, 17k mls, £11,250.</p> <p>0171 792 3896.</p> <p>HONDA NSX</p> <p>NSX 3.0, manual, red, 40,000 mls, FSH, 2 previous owners, immac, 01525 413750 / 01525 413750</p> <p>JAGUAR & DAIMLER</p> <p>4.0 Convertible, 1990/01, black, 17,000 mls, 61k FSH, 0181 705 6100</p>	<p>JXS CELEBRATION MODEL</p> <p>4.0 Convertible 1994, metallic blue, 2000 mls, full pack, £29,000</p> <p>01703 472028</p> <p>01703 472028</p> <p>01703 472028</p> <p>XJR</p> <p>auto, '95M, turquoise, cream hide.</p> <p>Director's car. FSH.</p> <p>£27,950</p> <p>Tel: 01455 555308</p>	<p>JXS V12</p> <p>GUT SAILOR SPECIAL EDITION</p> <p>HEL, auto, 1987, MOT, Tax, FSH, 12,000 mls, 97,000 miles, 01609 827242</p> <p>XK8 COUPE</p> <p>April '97, 2,000 mls, asph, cold climate, 17in wheels, cruise, leather, etc.</p> <p>Superb offer.</p> <p>Tel: Mr Perry</p> <p>0171 837 7040</p> <p>0850 242526</p>	<p>LEXUS</p> <p>93 Coupe</p> <p>4.0 GT Ltd, Dark Met Green, Full spec + cd/r & 5 channel TV, 32,000 mls, FSH.</p> <p>£29,995</p> <p>Tel: 0181 3402439</p> <p>LEXUS</p> <p>94L Boston green, 85,000 miles.</p> <p>Full service history.</p> <p>Charmant car.</p> <p>Best offer over £19,000.</p> <p>Tel: 0171 586 9945</p>	<p>MAZDA</p> <p>MAZDA 3200i, 1994, 18,000 mls, 01226 213924</p> <p>MERCEDES</p> <p>ING SAVINGS ON NEW MERCEDES</p> <p>C180 190 230 260 280 300 320 360 400 500 600 630 660 700 730 770 800 900 950 1000 1050 1100 1150 1200 1250 1300 1350 1400 1450 1500 1550 1600 1650 1700 1750 1800 1850 1900 1950 2000 2050 2100 2150 2200 2250 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THE SUNDAY TIMES BETRAYAL



What was really on Chris Patten's mind on the eve of the handover of Hong Kong to Beijing? No longer governor, he can speak his mind at last about Britain's treatment of the colony's people.

Tomorrow he tells Jonathan Dimbleby what he really thinks

THE SUNDAY TIMES
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THE SUNDAY PAPERS

Conan Doyle's town detects its fortune

A SUSSEX town with ambitions to be a big tourist attraction will double its population this weekend as 25,000 visitors descend to celebrate the creator of Sherlock Holmes.

The great detective might have been puzzled at why Crowborough waited so long to cash in on its connections with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who lived there during his last 25 years.

Julian Roup, who conceived the idea of the world's only annual Sherlock Holmes festival, said: "Interest in England's greatest sleuth just gets bigger every year and we are sitting on a literary brand name worth millions that is worshipped the world over and until recently have done nothing about it. For years Baker Street has cashed in and its links are purely fictitious. We are sitting on the real thing."

The inaugural festival last summer made a modest profit, which encouraged this month's more ambitious effort by the organisers, who foresee the town in East Sussex becoming one of this country's main tourist haunts.

Town traders are aware of the potential rewards, and most shops in the high street are displaying Holmes mem-

**Daniel
McGrory on the
case of the
tourism chiefs
who said better
late than never**

orabilia. There is to be a Hound of the Baskervilles dog show where both owner and beast have to pose as a character from the novels. Parties of Japanese tourists will be encouraged to don deerstalker hats and walk the Beacon golf course where Conan Doyle was once cap-

Leading article 21

tain. He was by his own admission such a disastrous player that he regarded golf simply as an excuse to stroll his beloved Sussex Downs.

Holmes, however, was touchy about country life. "It is my belief, Watson, founded upon my experience, that the lowest and vilest alleys of London do not present a more dreadful record of sin than

does the smiling and beautiful countryside," he said in *Copper Beeches*.

Politically correct American visitors will be invited to forget their usual antipathy to smoking and suck on pipes while watching Conan Doyle's old cricket club play a match in period dress between a Holmes XI and the Dastardly Moriarty's. Daytrippers can feast on the locally made Sherlock sausage, washed down by a Sherlock Holmes wine that will be uncorked for the first time today.

Not all the local people, however, share this enthusiasm for Holmesmania. Christina Brock, who owns a cobbler's shop where Conan Doyle was a customer, said: "Some shops refuse to advertise the festival and won't decorate their windows, nor dress in Victorian costume. This is meant to put us on the map and boost trade but there are some spoilsports."

Brian Newbury, the mayor, is embarrassed that the town council refused to fund the festival because of what he calls "a private feud". "I think it is a fabulous idea and anything that gets Crowborough noticed must be good for everyone here. Some fear it will ruin the character of the town if we have loads of hotels and



Robert Thorpe, owner of a menswear shop in Crowborough, entering into the spirit in Sherlock Holmes garb

fast-food joints spring up."

The festival organisers are optimistic. Apart from attracting many sponsors the town has been given £5,000 of lottery money to assess its tourist potential. Mr Roup, a

public relations consultant who lives in the town, said: "We are not after the bucket-and-spade package tours but tapping into the fast-growing literary tourism market."

As well as Conan Doyle's house at Windlesham Manor, which is now a retirement home, his friend Rudyard Kipling lived at nearby Burwash, Virginia Woolf at Rodmell, the Bloomsbury Group at Charleston, and Winnie the Pooh country is just to the north. "There are 400 Sherlock Holmes societies around the world so if we get a fraction of them it's a lot of money," Mr Roup said.

American academics are booked to attend the Holmes festival and there is a party of Japanese Holmesians returning this year led by Masamichi Higurashi, who is Conan Doyle's translator in Japan. "I enjoyed the first festival so much that I have brought some friends this time and I am sure many more Japanese will come," he said.

Mr Higurashi has already given £700 to the town's £20,000 appeal for a bronze statue of Conan Doyle.

The guidebooks boast that the author moved to Crowborough from Surrey in 1907 when he married his second wife, Jean Leckie, whose family lived next door to what was then called Little Windlesham. He added a billiards room and redecorated the house as the manor.

Mr Roup is unrepentant about Crowborough's blatant merchandising, with every-

thing from tea towels to Sherlock dolls on sale. "We should have Sherlock rock if it brings in visitors and revenue," Local traders agree. Elizabeth Streetfield, who has a home-made 6ft statue in her shop window, said: "Anything that generates interest in our town must be brilliant."

Tony Charlton, the festival's chairman and manager of the local supermarket, said: "It will take a few years to build up our reputation as a holiday magnet. But who knows? We could have the Sherlock Holmes hotel built soon and be catering for more visitors than Baker Street."

Conan Doyle spent 25 years in Sussex

Conan Doyle spent 25 years in Sussex

Conan Doyle spent 25 years in Sussex

RSC theatre 'in need of repair'

By Robin Young

THE Royal Shakespeare Company is to apply for lottery funds to refurbish and improve its theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon. The theatre, opened in 1932, is in urgent need of repair.

One recent performance was interrupted when rain leaked on to the stage and into the dressing rooms during a thunderstorm.

Poor acoustics and restricted sightlines impair the performances in the balcony, while pressure on public spaces at the theatre has increased "almost to breaking point", according to the company.

Backstage dressing rooms are cramped, the stage machinery is outdated and many working areas are close to breaking health and safety regulations. Among the improvements recommended as a result of a planning study carried out last year are adaptation of the main auditorium to improve sightlines from the balcony and the back of the theatre, larger bars and foyers, more lavatories and better access for the disabled.

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BRITISH AIRWAYS

Hamilton's Ladies count cost of loyalty

Russell Jenkins discovers tremors
of betrayal and bewilderment
behind the solid facade of Tatton

BEHIND substantial front doors in the Cheshire commuter-belt constituency of Tatton there was a small group of people, largely well-heeled and living in comfortable retirement, who were finding it difficult to face the world yesterday.

They were the ultra-loyalists, led by the Tatton Association chairman Alan Barnes and his ebullient wife Joan, who stuck by Neil Hamilton and pushed through his candidacy at the general election against vociferous opposition. Their call on ancient loyalties in a constituency where the Conservative Party is the hub of social life followed protestations by the Hamiltons of the former MPs' innocence, and lengthy private assurances that Sir Gordon

Downey's report would exonerate him. The activists wanted to believe him. Sir Gordon's damning conclusions came as a heavy personal blow which has left them feeling hurt, bewildered and betrayed. They were wondering last night how they can face

the social backlash over gin and tonics at bridge parties and fundraising lunches deep in the green belt of Knutsford, Alderley Edge and Wilmslow.

Pam Turner-Smith, chairman of the Tatton Women's Organisation, dubbed Hamilton's Ladies, was among those who had openly adored the MP who represented Tatton for 14 years. She said: "I don't know what to do. Everyone is going to say, 'I told you so.' I am just devastated by this."

Another of Hamilton's Ladies said plaintively: "He came to my house at Christmas and gave me a present. I asked him about all this and he spoke so well. I cannot comprehend what has happened. I never drink alone, but who will drink with me now?"

Mr Barnes, a retired businessman, has already fulfilled his promise to resign his post if Sir Gordon found against Mr Hamilton. Mrs Barnes, Mrs Turner-Smith, Pauline Breland, treasurer of the Tattler Women's Organisation and director of the fundraising 'Patrons' Club, and Jan Vernie, the association's president, are under pressure to follow suit.

The association, once a model for less active and well-supported associations, is in

lurmoil. The "rebels" led by Frank Keegan, the Alderley Edge branch treasurer, and Tony Martin, who resigned as association chairman before the election, have hailed the report as a vindication of their stand. They want the political spoils. Mr Mar-

in, a Knutsford businessman who led a walkout at the pre-election adoption meeting, has called on Mr Hamilton to leave the association, not realising that he had never joined.

The rebels are unlikely to sweep all before them. They are, in the main, individuals without a sizeable powerbase within the constituency. Since the election there has been, according to one association insider, a "hell of a lot of



Members of Tatton Women's Organisation demonstrating support for Neil Hamilton and his wife Christine, far right, before the election. Now local stalwarts feel hurt

beckbiting", with furious letters from the branches demanding the resignations of Mr Barnes and the agent, Peter McDowell. However, public displays of bloodletting, controversy and conflict are not the Tatton way.

Insiders were suggesting last night that most members had accepted there could be no comeback for the Hamiltons in Tatton. Sir Gordon has ensured that this assumption will become fact. The seismic shift in opinion was indicated yesterday when Bert Grange, a Knutsford county councillor, executive committee member and a staunch Hamilton loyalist, said that the executive will

be asking for Mr Hamilton to resign his membership. "He was very supportive of Neil and Christine and spoke up for them at an adoption meeting," one member said. "For Bert to do that is really something."

The real victims of the Hamiltons' political disgrace

are the Hamilton Ladies, whose steadfast support kept his hopes alive. "They are the ladies who go to bridge parties," an association member said. "They are in their 60s and 70s, retired people who have time for that sort of life. They worshipped him. For them, he could do no wrong. I

don't know what they must be thinking today." Members on the selection committee are looking to the future and are talking about making overtures to a "big hitter" such as Malcolm Rifkind, Michael Portillo or Chris Patten. Taton, once the fifth safest Tory seat in England, remains

Most party stalwarts believe that they have no choice but to sell up and move away. However, their circumstances are

complicated by Mrs Hamilton's elderly parents, who recently moved into the area to be close to their daughter. A straw poll in the *Manchester Evening News* suggested that most people in the Cheshire constituency believe he should go now with as much grace as he can muster.

Hague determined to get tough with rebels

BY PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

TOUGHER powers to discipline Conservative MPs are to be introduced to prevent controversial figures such as Neil Hamilton heaping embarrassment on the party.

William Hague has told close aides working on a reorganisation of the party that he wants to ensure that the leadership is never again left powerless in the face of a Commons scandal. Mr Hague has let it be known that he will be "ruthlessly intolerant" of financial misconduct. He believes that the Hamilton affair has reinforced the case that he put during the leadership

election for a "rapid and radical" reform of the party. In return for party members being given a much greater say over policy and the choice of Conservative leader, the

party centrally will take new powers over the selection of parliamentary candidates. It was an open secret that John Major and Brian Mawhinney, then the party chairman, wanted Mr Hamilton to stand down as the candidate for Tatton before the election to spare the party further pain. But with the choice and future of candidates in the hands of the local

associations they watched
helpless as the local party
stood by its man.

Mr. Hamilton confirmed yesterday that he has never been a member of the Conservative Association, a fact that surprised his local party.

Mr Hague hopes that the reforms will lead to a unification of the party's different wings: the National Union (its voluntary arm), Conservative Central Office and the parliamentary party. If the party is a single entity, senior Tories believe, matters of discipline and selection will be more easily handled.

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AUSTIN REED

Wrong sort of rain fails to replenish supplies

By NICK NUTTALL
ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

LARGE areas of southern and eastern England face a third summer of water shortages in 1998 unless there is substantial rainfall this winter, water companies said yesterday.

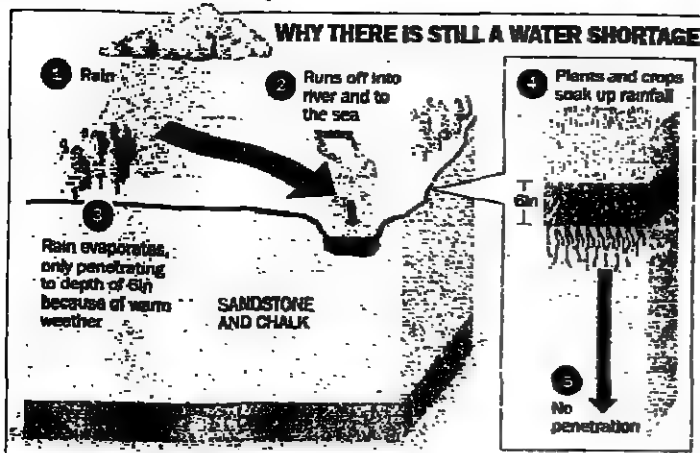
Despite the wettest June since 1860, the rain has failed to replenish underground water sources.

Pamela Taylor, chief executive of the Water Companies Association, which represents the smaller firms, said yesterday that 40 per cent of their supplies come from aquifers and boreholes hundreds of feet below ground.

"June has had a significant impact on demand with customers using 25 per cent less water than in June 1996. River and reservoir levels are in some areas now full. But this summer rain makes no difference to underground water sources," she said.

"These can only be topped up by winter rain because most of summer rain evaporates or is sucked away by plants like the bindweed in my garden," Ms Taylor said.

She said water companies were "keeping their fingers crossed" that further restrictions, such as



hosepipe bans, would not be needed this summer. But she added: "We must have rain this winter to restock the water reservoirs underground ready for next summer."

In the long term, Britain needed better planning of homes and businesses to ensure that scant water resources were not over-stretched by rising demands from new villages and settlements, the association said.

Ray Tennant, chairman of the association and a director at Mid Southern and South East water

companies, said yesterday: "People want to know why all this rain has not solved the water resources problem. You could say that it is the wrong sort of rain, rather like Railtrack's leaves on the line problem."

Summer rainfall may be moistening the surface soils but, some six inches below, the soils remain completely dry. It means the rain hitting the ground is running off into rivers and out to sea. Summer temperatures also mean a great deal of water in the upper soils

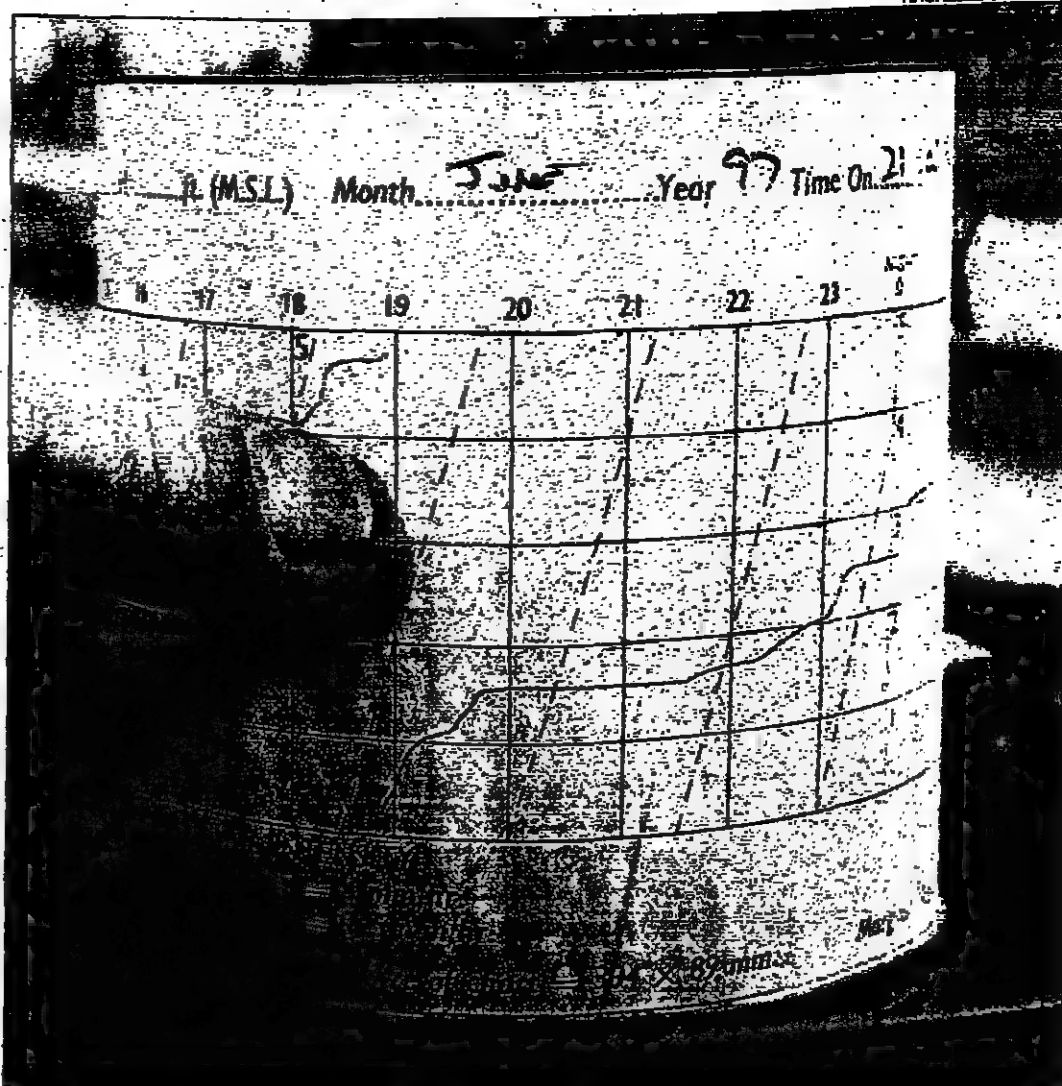
evaporates before it can penetrate down. Mr Tennant said that temperature would be the key to whether more restrictions were needed during the rest of the summer.

Water companies also say that several new reservoirs are needed. But their claims have received a lukewarm response from the Environment Agency and ministers. Critics say that the industry first needs to do more to reduce leaks, curb demand and educate customers to save water.

Mr Tennant disclosed that, instead of building new reservoirs, some companies were looking at expanding existing ones by increasing the size of dams and the embankments. He said the South East water company was looking at Ardingly reservoir in West Sussex and Arlington, near Eastbourne.

Such schemes would require planning permission but the applications were likely to be less controversial and time-consuming than those for new reservoirs. He said preliminary studies indicated that expansion of reservoirs might boost their capacity by up to a quarter.

Forecast, page 24



The wettest June on record since 1860 will not have helped to prevent water shortages next year

Witness says woman knew lover had HIV

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN LARNACA

LAWYERS defending the Cypriot fisherman accused of knowingly infecting a British divorcee with Aids finished their case yesterday with a surprise witness who said Janette Pink had admitted to him she knew her lover was HIV-positive.

Antonis Kombos, a café owner, also told the hearing that he had slept with Mrs Pink's daughter while she was under-age, and said that Mrs Pink had an affair with another man.

Mrs Pink, 42, was last night said to be "devastated and disgusted" by the latest attack on her and her daughter, Katherine, now 21. She has denied having an affair with anyone other than Pavlos Georgiou, who is charged with infecting her. Her family strenuously denied the latest allegations.

Mr Kombos, 33, told the Larnaca court on the final day of testimony that when he

warned Mrs Pink that she was with an Aids carrier she replied: "Yes, I know. I'm dating him."

Mr Kombos told the court that Mrs Pink had had a relationship with another Cypriot, called just Damianos, before that with Mr Georgiou. He said that at the same time he was having an affair with Mrs Pink's daughter and spent nights next door to her and Damianos. "I presume when two people spend the night together, they sleep together," he said.

Mr Georgiou's lawyer, Tasos Economou, earlier told reporters he had tried to persuade Damianos to give evidence, but the man was now married with children and was too embarrassed to face the court. Mr Kombos insisted under cross-examination that he hardly knew the defendant and decided only on Thursday to support his evidence.

Questioned about his relationship with Miss Pink, Kombos said he began seeing her in 1988 but stopped in 1993 when he went abroad. He told the court he did not know her age at the time. The prosecution made no mention of the fact that she would have been 12 in 1988, but said after the hearing they were making further inquiries.

Mr Georgiou has denied knowingly and negligently transmitting the virus and in his testimony claimed that Mrs Pink was a "nymphomaniac" who refused to let him wear a condom. If found guilty he faces two years in prison or a £2,000 fine. The trial was adjourned to July 16.



Pink: disgusted by new claims made in court

Jeans market in need of a turn-up

By TIM JONES

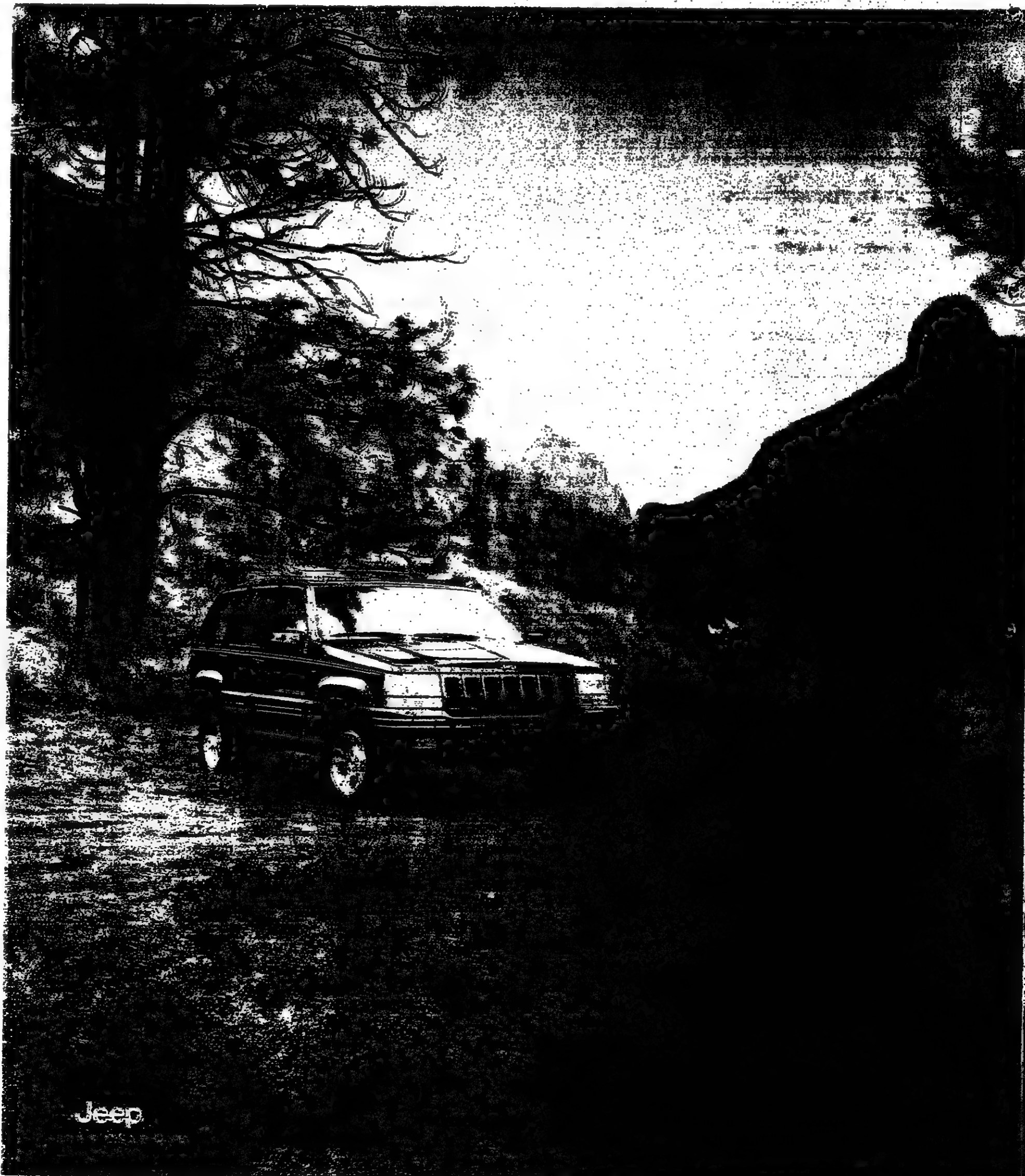
SALES of jeans fell by 2 per cent in the past year, from £1.18 billion to £1.15 billion. Fewer than half of the population bought a pair of jeans, Mintel, the market analyst company, said. Some 43 million pairs of jeans will be bought this year, the lowest figure since the late 1980s, and four million down on the total four years ago.

Sales are likely to decline further because of a projected drop in the number of 15 to 24-year-olds. Since 1992 the average price of a pair of jeans has risen by almost 12 per cent from £24 to £26.86, because of the increasing

popularity of designer makes such as Armani, Guess and Calvin Klein.

Levi's share of the market has dropped by 2.6 per cent in the past year to 21.6 per cent, but Wrangler's has risen by more than 6 per cent. Men, the report shows, are now more likely to buy more jeans than women, and choose more expensive brands.

More than 55 per cent of men bought at least one pair of jeans last year, compared with 43 per cent of women. While most spent less than £50, 18 per cent of men and nearly 12 per cent of women spent more than that.



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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

SATURDAY JULY 5 1997

Nearly 25% of members opt for cash after Woolwich flotation

Spending boom alarm

By ALAIDAIR MURRAY AND KAREN ZAGOR

CITY fears that the consumer spending boom is set to accelerate again yesterday as it emerged that nearly a quarter of Woolwich Building Society members have decided to sell their free shares immediately in its £5 billion flotation.

The huge sell-off will add £1.2 billion to a consumer sector already flush with cash from windfall payouts.

Analysts predicted yesterday that Woolwich shares will reach about 300p in first-day trading, valuing the company at £5 billion, and ensuring that the converting building society's 2.5 million members will share an average payout of nearly £2,000.

About £29 billion has been paid out in windfalls since Alliance & Leicester converted in April. Goldman Sachs, the US investment bank, yesterday raised its estimate of the total payout from building society and insurance company windfalls this year to £37 billion from an original prediction of £20 billion. It says that the windfall bonanza will boost personal disposable income by about 0.5 per cent this year.

The scale of the latest payout will increase pressure on the Bank of England to raise rates sharply to curb consumer demand. Economists predict that the Bank could increase rates as much as half a point when its monetary policy committee meets next week as the Budget failed to include substantial rises in consumer taxes.

The pound, which has soared since Wednesday's Bud-

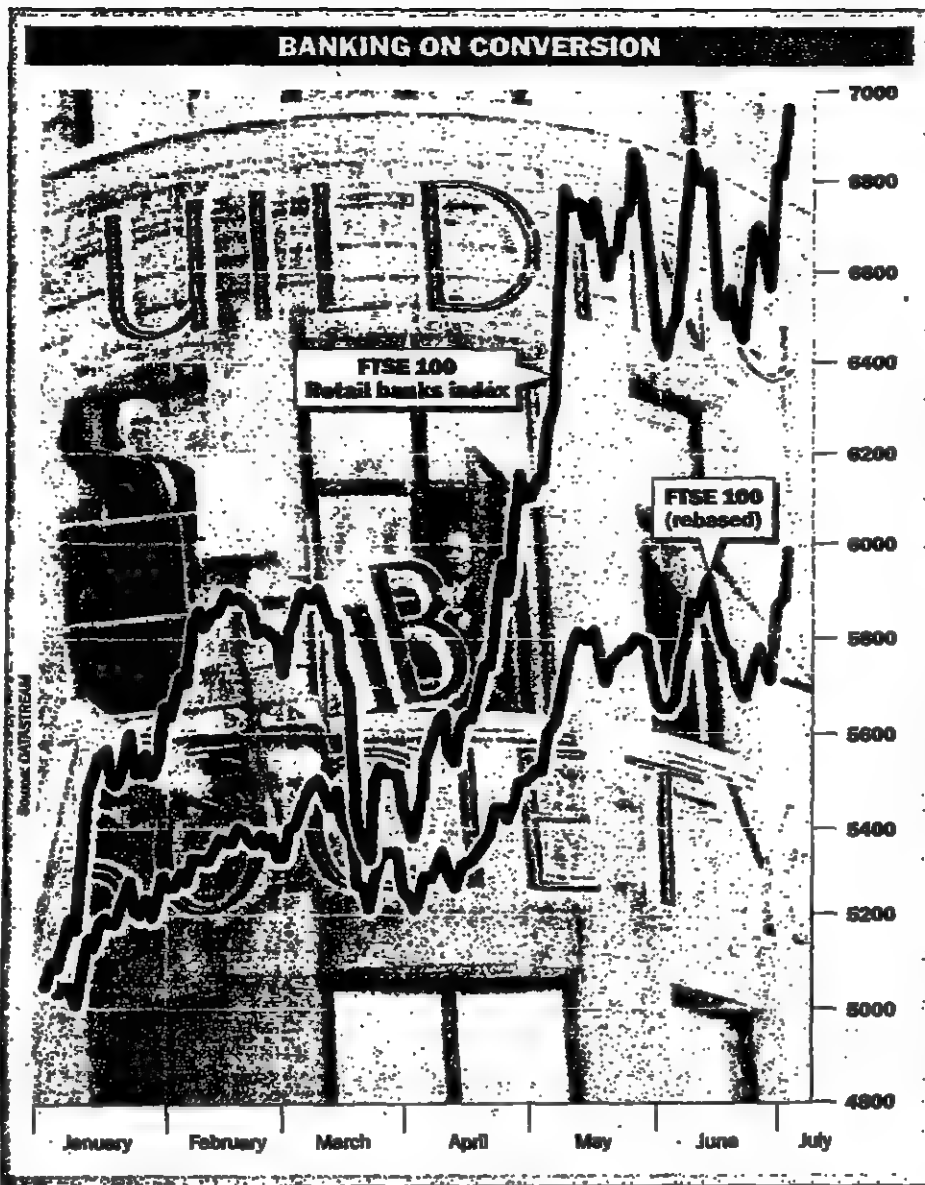
get on expectations that rates are set to rise again, moved to new highs again yesterday. Sterling's trade-weighted index hit a seven-year high of 104.0, while the pound hit a six-year high against the mark of DM2.9687.

But the stock market failed to capitalise on recent gains, closing down 18.9 points at 4,812.8 as profit-taking set in. Dealers said the market is likely to be more cautious next week before the Bank's meeting, after this week's 4.5 per cent rise.

Some 23 per cent of Woolwich members have indicated that they will sell their shares at once through the share sale facility. Those shares will be auctioned to institutions on the first four days of next week with about 5.8 per cent to be sold on the first day.

Qualifying members of the society, which is converting to a bank, will receive at least 450 shares each. The average allocation is 657 shares, according to the Woolwich, which has 5.5 per cent of the mortgage market and 4.1 per cent of retail savings and is Britain's fifth-biggest lender. It is expected to join the FTSE 100 after the next review in September.

The World Gold Council yesterday launched a stinging attack on the Reserve Bank of Australia after news that it had made a major gold sale



Tempus and market, page 28

London Clubs bid set for approval

By DOMINIC WALSH AND JASON NISSE

THE Monopolies and Mergers Commission is expected to approve London Clubs International's £190 million bid for Capital Corporation, a rival casino group, when it presents its report to Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, on Monday.

Neither company would comment, but an insider at Capital Corp, which is resisting the takeover, confirmed that the bid appeared likely to be waved through. However, the MMC may attach conditions, which would allow Mrs Beckett to reject its recommendations and block the bid.

The proposed acquisition would add Crockfords and the Colony Club to the London Clubs portfolio, and the MMC has to decide whether this gives the group an effective monopoly of the casino market in the capital.

There have been suggestions that the MMC might give the green light on condition that London Clubs sells one or two of its seven existing London casinos.

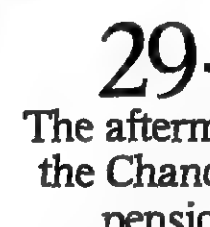
Alan Goodenough, chief executive of London Clubs, withdrew the bid as soon as it was referred to the MMC, and it is by no means certain he is still interested in pursuing it. "Even if the bid gets waved through, one can't automatically assume he will bid again," said a source close to the company.

Mrs Beckett last week overturned the MMC's decision that Bass should be allowed to buy Carlsberg-Tetley.

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Woolwich savers anticipate a £2,000 windfall

Low poll threat to Tunnel deal

By JASON NISSE

EUROTUNNEL may have to put back its meeting to seek shareholder approval for a £4.4 billion rescue restructuring until autumn, increasing the risk of the troubled company going into receivership.

The meeting is due to take place in Paris on Thursday, but the company and its adviser, Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, are worried that they will not be able to secure a quorum of 25 per cent of shareholders voting on the deal to enable the restructuring to be approved.

"We are reasonably confident that we will succeed in the vote on the restructuring if we get a quorum, and we are working hard to get a quorum," a Eurotunnel spokeswoman said yesterday.

The company was boosted last week when Northern Cross, a Bermuda-based investment company holding 4 per cent of Eurotunnel shares, and the Association of

Eurotunnel Shareholders, a private investor group, said that they would back the company.

However, Eurotunnel may be a victim of its own success. The vast majority of its 600,000 shareholders have a holding worth under £500 and may not be inclined to vote if they think the outcome is a foregone conclusion.

If the quorum is not met, the shareholder meeting will be put back by at least two months and may be held at the same time as the 174 banks meet to agree the deal. However, it is a condition of the bankers giving approval to the restructuring that shareholders have already backed it.

This will be Eurotunnel's second attempt to put the restructuring to a vote and secure a quorum. Last month's meeting needed a 33 per cent quorum received proxies from shareholders representing only 6.72 per cent.

Fears mount over troubled WEW

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM, RETAIL CORRESPONDENT

FEARS are growing about trading at WEW, the discount retailer, whose shares have fallen sharply this year to an all-time low.

Market sources suggest the company, which made the latest in a series of profit warnings in May, is preparing to make another statement to clarify its position. The company is understood to have been holding talks with its main shareholder, Warburg Pincus.

WEW, under the management of James Millar, chairman, and Richard Boland, chief executive, has been slowly converting its What Every-

one Wants stores to a new format named The Store.

Richard Ratner, a retail analyst at Mees Pierson, said:

"The conversions have worked, but WEW is bleeding from the tail-end of unconverted stores." He expects the company to report a full-year loss in excess of £2 million. The loss could hit WEW's ability to roll out The Store into other branches.

The old stores have been trading poorly all year, but the bad summer weather has made matters worse and like-like sales are believed to have plunged.

Mr Boland sold 80,000 shares from his 155,700 personal holding in the chain last month at 14p a share. He said the cash was needed to pay a tax bill. The shares closed at 9½p yesterday, compared with a 12-month high of 29½p and 84½p in 1993.

BT pension fund buys control of Argent

By PAUL DURMAN

INSTITUTIONAL shareholders are furious that Michael and Peter Freeman, the highly regarded property developers who run Argent, have sold out and surrendered control to the BT pension scheme for 370p a share, much less than the stock market price.

The brothers' sale yesterday of their 7.6 per cent stake for about £18 million was accompanied by the sale of the 32.9 per cent of Argent owned by venture capital backers, led by Warburg Pincus. The BT scheme and its BrITel Property arm now own 40.2 per cent of Argent which, under the Takeover Code, forces it to bid 375p cent premium to the net assets in the last accounts. It is argued that the sub-market price is justified because the



Michael Freeman: selling

to 372½p. The BrITel offer values Argent at £240 million, against £150 million at flotation. It also represents a 20 per cent premium to the net assets in the last accounts. It is argued that the sub-market price is justified because the

Phantom writ haunts Lloyd-Webber

By JON ASHWORTH

LORD Lloyd-Webber has been caught up in a ghoulish row with Gaston Leroux, the Frenchman who penned *Phantom of the Opera* more than 80 years ago.

The Really Useful Group, which oversees Lord Lloyd-Webber's productions, is being sued for allegedly failing to pass more than £700,000 in royalty payments to the estate of the

late writer. Details are outlined in a writ lodged at the High Court in London. Really Useful said the writ had yet to be served, and it was not in a position to comment. Henry Hepworth, the London law firm acting for the plaintiffs, declined to comment.

The claim is thought to relate to a change in copyright law that may mean the Andrew Lloyd Webber/Cameron Mackintosh production of *Phantom* was out of copyright in the UK for a

certain period of time. The writ refers to an agreement in July 1988 between Really Useful and the Leroux estate, in respect of performances of *Phantom* in territories other than France.

Phantom made its debut in London in October 1986. The estate is claiming £721,252 in royalty periods, together with a declaration for payment of sums that may be found to be due.

The action is further unwelcome publicity for Lord Lloyd-Webber, who

gave warning recently that the days of the grandiose musical could be numbered. Patrick McKenna, chairman and chief executive of Really Useful, left in May amid misgivings over strategy. Lord Lloyd-Webber has since taken a hands-on role.

Leroux wrote *Phantom* in 1911, portraying his twisted anti-hero as a circus freak who helped to build the Paris Opera. The 1943 film cast him as a bitter composer, disfigured by acid.

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A WORKING WEEK FOR: BRIAN GILBERTSON

A world-class operator of African extraction

Carl Mortished meets the man behind the transformation of a stodgy conglomerate as he prepares it for a \$1bn share offering

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There is a tale that is told when you mention Brian Gilbertson to a fellow South African. When the chairman of Gencor arrives by helicopter at the mining group's Johannesburg headquarters, the staff are said to murmur: "The ego has landed."

By rights, a mining boss should be big-headed, callously sweeping the earth and people from his path as he pursues that ounce of yellow metal. Yet Brian Gilbertson is remarkably reserved, a polite man and reluctant speaker who will reveal, if pressed, a dry sense of humour. He is in London for what will be the crowning achievement of his career — the launch of Billiton, the demerged, non-precious metals arm of Gencor, on the London market.

It is an astonishing story of a huge investment gamble made with other people's money in a period of political turmoil. It is also about the transformation of a stodgy Afrikaans conglomerate into a world-class mining company. The gambles have paid off and the demerged Billiton is now preparing for an international share offering to raise \$1 billion, but the significance has to be teased out of Gilbertson.

He insists: "In a sense it was a gamble, but I emphasise that we did the most careful calculations."

When Gilbertson joined Gencor in 1988, the company was a typical South African octopus with interests in oil, paper products and finance, as well as mining. Like most conglomerates, the group was valued by the market at a discount to the sum of its parts and a debate grew up about its future. Gencor was then run by Derek Keys, but in 1992 Gilbertson found himself in the driving seat.

He said: "Derek went to play golf with President de Klerk and when he came back he said he was going to become the Minister for Trade and Industry. To my total astonishment — I mean that seriously — I became chairman."

Gilbertson took over in the middle of a huge and, at times, very public debate initiated by Keys over whether Gencor should "unbundle" — shed its non-mining interests, including Engen and Sappi, and focus on the business of extracting gold, platinum and coal from the ground. "It was the first important decision I had to make," he remembers. Gencor's two big shareholders, Sanlam and Rembrandt, the Afrikaans institutions, went along with his decision to unbundle.

"Within 15 minutes of the shareholder resolution to go forward, I delivered my letter of resignation to the other companies. Engen asked me to stay on, but the others were pleased to see me go," he says with a smile. He found himself with

a focused mining group, but trapped by exchange controls in a country that was ignored by foreign investors. The next challenge was to invest abroad.

Years previously, Gilbertson had what he calls his damascene conversion. A trip to a small Gencor goldmine in Brazil led to a visit to the massive Carajas iron ore operations in the Amazon. Gilbertson becomes animated when he describes the operation run by CVRD, the Brazilian state mining company. "Going there and seeing what they had built there, this huge railway line, this huge iron ore deposit and then they point out in the distance where there is another mountain filled with iron ore."

Gilbertson would deny it — his grey eyes stare very intensely if he disagrees with you — but South Africa had become too small for his ambitions. World-class assets meant literally that, but Gencor had no means to raise money abroad and even getting visas to travel to some countries had once been impossible.

However, black rule changed the world for Gencor. Curiously, the former Afrikaans conglomerate, a weak rival to Anglo-American, the mining and industrial colossus, became the beneficiary of political munificence of the highest order. Nelson Mandela himself presided over the opening of major Gencor investments, the \$2 billion Alusaf Hillside aluminium smelter, the Columbus stainless steel plant and Gencor's glamorous new Johannesburg headquarters.

Billiton would not be climbing on to the world stage as an international mining group without a relaxation of exchange controls, and some analysts muse that Gencor

has been groomed as a rival to Anglo-American. As one analyst jokingly puts it: "My enemy's enemy is my friend."

The Gencor building reveals a bit more about Brian Gilbertson and perhaps what lies behind the anecdote about his eyes and ego. However, the explanation is not what you might expect. Like most established companies, Gencor had an art collection — a predictable series of landscapes of South Africa and lots of wildlife, nothing out of the ordinary for a mining company.

But a new company with a new building in a country undergoing radical change needed something different. So Gencor hired a consultant artist to help to commission a new collection. Kendell Geers wanted to reflect South Africa's transition from the old to the new and Gilbertson liked the idea. But the combination of mining corporation and an artist with a subversive reputation caused some sparks to fly.

The first purchase, a painting by William Kentridge, was indicative of what was to come — a dark and brooding Johannesburg street scene with a long line of protesters carrying red banners. Painted to represent the period in 1990 when marches were first legalised, the piece was displayed at the time of the



Brian Gilbertson is in Britain for the launch on the London market of Billiton, the demerged non-precious metals arm of Gencor, the South African mining group

disastrous Inkatha march on the ANC headquarters in Johannesburg and almost caricatured the anxieties of white South Africans before the elections. More works followed, including one in which a landscape is being crushed by what looks like a towering lump of coal, the piece being entitled *A nicely built city never resists destruction*.

Enraged Gencor employees stuck office memo labels over certain paintings considered pornographic, but, in the midst of all the outrage, Gilbertson refused to ban any of the works, although some of the more controversial pieces have ended up in his own office.

Having challenged established notions of good taste, Gilbertson went further and embarked on a financial and corporate adventure that was to be more far-reaching than the unbundling of Gencor. Gilbertson comments: "We realised that South African groups which had been leaders were slipping behind because they could not operate internationally."

His opportunity came in 1994 as Shell, the Anglo-Dutch oil group, decided to divest its loss-making metals divisions. "It was difficult. Two billion dollars' worth of assets — but all we had was \$300 million offshore," remembers Gilbertson. To make matters worse, the core of Billiton's

portfolio was aluminium, a metal that was plunging new depths as Russian producers dumped stockpiles in a desperate search for dollars. "Aluminium was dropping like a brick and analysts were saying we should not touch this, but we made a judgment that \$1,200 per tonne was simply not a viable long-term price," Gilbertson explains.

Securing finance proved an almost insurmountable obstacle as exchange controls prevented Gencor from funding the deal and the banks were wary of backing a myriad of joint ventures scattered across the globe. There was no company, no audited track record

and no balance sheet. In the end, Gencor persuaded Shell to fill the gap in the short term by subscribing to a \$300 million bond issue and Gencor bought Billiton for \$1.2 billion.

Gilbertson's team budgeted the deal on the assumption of "disaster", that the aluminium price remained flat for three years, but no sooner was the contract signed than the aluminium producer nations signed an agreement restraining production and the aluminium price soared. Gencor paid off the Billiton debt in short order and prepared to float the business in London.

Gilbertson appears a bit nervous about the planned investor roadshows, not least in America with the complex SEC disclosure rules, alien to a South African used to the friendly Johannesburg ex-

change. However, there are reasons why Billiton may face a difficult ride in the international arena after so much success. Base metal prices are high and some analysts reckon that Billiton will be selling shares at the peak of the cycle, making it difficult to persuade investors that they should buy stock in a debt-free company, investing in mining assets at what may be the top of the market.

Gilbertson, aged 53, seems to be in a hurry. Gencor has done well in the new South Africa, enjoying close relations with the Government that it was able to reclassify core South African assets as foreign components of the demerged Billiton. In the wider world, it will enjoy no such political favours, but Gilbertson is used to turmoil. In fact, he seems to thrive on it.

Thought for the day

Empty chair

SOME lackey from Hambros was refusing to admit this last night, but it is a truth, universally acknowledged in the City that the bank is looking for a new chief executive. This is because on July 22, at the annual meeting, Lord Hambro, will retire and Sir Chips Keswick, deputy chairman and chief executive, steps up. Hambros, quite sensibly, appointed headhunters a while back to find a new chief executive, and don't ask me why they won't admit it now. But I understand there has been a bit of a problem finding candidates. It could be to do with various other high-profile City jobs still vacant. More likely it is the Lankia factor. The bank's own internal inquiry into its support for the Andrew Regan bid for the Co-op is due out any time. Various watchdogs, such as the Bank of England and the Securities and Futures Authority, are also taking an interest. Not exactly tempting, is it?

OVERHEARD at a Westminster cocktail party: a new Labour MP was asked about the potential threat to Britain's booming economy — killing the goose that laid the



golden egg, in other words. He replied: "If you fatten up the goose before you wing its neck, you get more meat off the breast."

Grecian earn

THE latest scribbler to cut loose for another berth is Angelos Anastasiou, utilities expert at Parnure Gordon, who is heading for Credit Lyonnais Laing. There he will be joining the vastly experienced Arthur Hephner. But he will leave behind Tressen McCarthy, the telecoms analyst at Parnure, and also his wife, Angelos is, alas, no relation to the other Greek utilities analyst, Lakis Athanasiou at UBS. This means I cannot retell the story about the goat. But some of us remember, Lakis. Some of us remember.

Blair power

I WAS sitting next to a head of research at lunch the other day who admitted that the stream of circulars coming out of brokers these days was so copious that he was having to use journalistic skills to hype his own and catch the attention of fund managers. Within days, two examples hit my desk. Credit Lyonnais Laing again, always keen on an eye-catching cover, has a Budget commentary which features a rather good cartoon of Blair, Cook, Brown et al as the Spice Girls. Meanwhile BZW's own equity strategy commentary carries the simple headline "Bonkers".

Low/no pay

THE Low Pay Commission, under the leadership now of George Bain of the London Business School, needs you. But only if you are a City professional with experience in employment law, perhaps.



Professor Bain is looking for members to serve as commissioners and help to set the minimum wage. No shortage of trade union members. But the commission is, in particular, after one or two City types with the necessary legal experience. Might serve as a useful cap to a successful career, but there is no money in it — expenses only, I'm afraid.

"FREAK storms" was the excuse for the collapse of all phone lines into the Norwich Union yesterday and the day before — all except the car phone of Allan Bridgewater, the chief executive, for some reason. Funny enough, The Times has been inundated with complaints that the company's helpline was unobtainable for some days now — come rain or shine.

Peace talk

QUITE the little Acas, the BBC these days. On Thursday the Today programme persuaded Bill Morris of the transport union and Bob Ayling of British Airways to sit down in a little cubbyhole at Broadcasting House and settle their differences — in vain, as it turned out. Yesterday morning The Business Breakfast brought in Allan Black of the GMB union and Malcolm Fordy of the Construction Confederation to talk about the looming building workers'

strike. Black said the employers had refused to talk. Fordy denied this. After the programme Adam Shaw, the presenter, suggested they might at least have a chat. They agreed. As Lord Reith might have put it, union shall speak unto employer.

Better late . . .

SOMETIMES publishing deadlines can be the very devil. A sycophantic profile in The City, the glossy magazine produced by the City of London Corporation, details the rise and rise again of Howard Hodgson, former funeral parlour entrepreneur and chief executive (it says here) of the lighter maker, Ronson International.

"But what of the future?" it concludes. "Does Hodgson see himself collecting his pension from Ronson in about 18 years from now?" Hodgson replies: "The board might have other ideas and throw me out head first from the window. You never know . . ." How perceptive; as a hurried postscript makes clear, Hodgson "has since tendered his resignation with immediate effect, following a vote by the board of Ronson". In other words, the directors threw him out of the window last month.

MARTIN WALLER



Hodgson: his rise, rise . . . and fall

Should you be
Browned off about
your pension?
Talk to an IFA.

For example, that poor hedgehog is planning to retire in 50 and expect £100 pension. If you'd like to know if Mr Brown's abolition of ACT tax credits will leave your pension provision in the red, an IFA can tell you. Call for the names of three IFA's near you. With your first half hour consultation free, the task will be less taxing still.

0117 971 1177

One phone call. Three different IFA's near you. And unbiased advice. Or call in where you see the big sign.

You please, I think I'd like to know more about talking to an IFA. Please send me my information pack, the names of three local IFA's and a voucher for my half hour free consultation. I understand that no-one will call me as a result of filling in this coupon. The address is: IFA Promotions Limited, 17-19 Emery Road, Reddington, Bedfordshire MK45 5FF

Name _____ Address _____ Postcode _____

See an IFA



STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Pre-flotation deals take Woolwich shares to 327p

SHARES in the Woolwich traded at 327p on the grey market last night before official dealings start on Monday. Brokers are forecasting brisk trading in the shares, matching the welcome given to the former building societies Alliance & Leicester, up 19p at 618p yesterday, and Halifax, 5p better at 775p.

IG Index, the City bookmaker, was quoting a range of 323p to 331p for Woolwich. It has established a useful track record in forecasting the opening price of mutual flotations.

Strong demand is expected from institutional investors before a series of auctions, starting on Monday. Brokers said fund managers may be willing to pay over the odds to increase their weightings. The fair value for the shares, calculated by the likes of Credit Lyonnais Laing, the broker, is put at just 250p.

Capitalised at more than £5 billion, Woolwich will automatically enter the FTSE-100 index in September, thereby attracting the attention of tracking funds. Just over 25 per cent of the Woolwich's 2.5 million members have chosen to sell their shares. Those choosing to hang on will reap a windfall worth about £1,470.

The rest of the banks took a breather after this week's strong gains, although there was selective support for HSBC, up 14p to £19.53, Lloyds TSB, up 5p to 68p, and Standard Chartered, up 6p to 90p.

Elsewhere, share prices were again scaling new heights in early trading. Conditions in the futures market proved volatile as traders tried to claw back some of the huge losses suffered in the wake of the Budget. At one stage, the FTSE-100 hit an all-time high of 4,879.0, but, with Wall Street closed for Independence Day, the London market lacked direction. The index eventually closed 18.9 down, at 4,812.8, on turnover of 910 million shares. Even so, the gain on the week is 172.5, or 3.7 per cent.

Midland Independent Newspapers responded to an agreed bid from Mirror Group and a subsequent market raid on the shares with a rise of 7p to 105p. Mirror, up 14p at 200p, is offering 210p a share, valuing MIN at £297 million. It bought 13.85 million MIN shares in the market at 210p. This stretches its total holding to 34.45 million.



Peter Newey, chairman of Hornby, down 15p at 223p

lion shares, or 25 per cent of Midland.

Sterling's strength continued to cast a shadow over manufacturing companies. It has also forced Dresner Kleinwort Benson, the broker, to take a bearish view of the engineering sector generally. Top of the list of casualties was GKN, down 39p at 920p, with LucasVarity 10p off, at 192p.

Coats Vyella finished 10p lower at a new low of 106p. NatWest Securities, the broker, says the strong pound makes textile companies uncompetitive against overseas suppliers. Now the abolition of the tax credit on dividends may force companies such as Coats to review its payout policy.

after the broker downgraded its recommendation for the shares from "buy" to "hold". TI Group touched 450p before rebounding to reduce its deficit to 6p, at 473p. The company has denied claims that changes to the tax treatment of pension funds will hit profits by up to £10 million a year. The company also denies that the strong pound will take a toll, saying that only 10 per cent of output goes for export.

Currency factors also hit

British Steel, down a further 3p at 137p.

However, Andy Chambers, of Societe Generale Strauss Turnbull, the broker, said he did not believe that either the pension fund issue or the strength of sterling would make a major impact on earnings. He said that falls of 10 per cent in share prices on the back of a 2 per cent

year from £1.46 billion to £1.4 billion. A profits warning left PGA European Tour Courses nursing a fall of 8p at 51p. The golf course operator had said that the strong pound and a "variable performance" would leave full-year profits "materially below" expectations. Sean Kelly, managing director, has left and the company take a hit on this too. His departure coincides with the appointment of Richard Thompson as chairman and Ken Schofield, tour director of the European PGA and fan Todd, managing director of IMG Europe, as non-executive directors.

Another company to feel the ill-effects of a strong pound is Hornby, down 15p at 223p after reporting a drop in pre-tax profits last year from £4.9 million to £2.65 million. The group said there were few signs of the retail boom that is being reported elsewhere.

Mackie International returned from suspension at 22p after its rights issue and restructuring, having been frozen at 11p. It eventually closed at 28p. That compares with the original rights price of 30p.

Shares in Life Numbers were suspended at 9p pending the reverse takeover by XL Communications. The deal values XL at £5.63 million.

GILT EDGED: There was a further steep flattening of the yield curve as the bond market went some way to clawing back this week's losses. The short end of the market remains overshadowed by the prospect of a further rise in interest rates when the Bank of England economic committee meets next week, but there was demand for issues over eight years.

Demand for index-linked issues was such that the Bank of England was able to offer further tranches consisting of £150 million of Treasury Index-Linked 2½ per cent 2011 and £150 million of Treasury Index-Linked 2½ per cent 2020. Brokers reported that supplies of the latter were quickly sold.

In futures, the September series of the Long Gilt finished 59p better, at £114.7, with 41,000 contracts completed. In longs, Treasury 8 per cent 2015 put on £2.34, at £101.16, while, in shorts, Treasury 8 per cent 2000 was a tick better at £102.16.

Wall Street was closed.

MAJOR INDICES

New York:	
Dow Jones	Closed
S&P Composite	
Tokyo:	
Nikkei average	19968.00 (+133.41)
Hong Kong:	
Hang Seng	14622.97 (+232.77)
Amsterdam:	
Euro Index	907.19 (+10.08)
Sydney:	
ASX	2233.4 (+9.3)
Frankfurt:	
DAX	3962.53 (+55.14)
Singapore:	
Strait Times	1985.94 (+23.54)
Brussels:	
General	1408.33 (+43.77)
Paris:	
CAC 40	2634.48 (+2.58)
Zurich:	
SEA 50	1794.87 (+6.50)
London:	
FT 30	3050.5 (+31.5)
FTSE 100	4812.8 (+18.9)
FTSE 250	4633.0 (+22.3)
FTSE 350	2311.3 (+4.6)
FTSE European 100	2618.41 (+24.77)
FTSE All-Share	2260.61 (+4.75)
FTSE New Financials	2273.31 (+8.88)
FTSE Fixed Interest	124.27 (+0.52)
FTSE Govt Secs	97.27 (+0.31)
Bangles	900.32
SEAO Volume	910.2m
US:	
DAX	14675 (+10.03)
German Mark	2.2016 (+0.0016)
Exchange Index	104.01 (+0.25)
Bank of England official base (April)	5.00%
ECU	1.9362
RPI	159.9 May (2.0%) Jan 1997-100
RPIX	159.3 May (2.5%) Jan 1997-100

RECENT ISSUES

AIT	130p
Ashtree	126p
Avon	942p
Camden	96p
European Mining	24p
Grosvenor Hides	3p
Grosvenor Hides Writs	1p
Heart of Midlothian	110p
Highland Timber	124p
Integrated As Mgt	125p
Longbridge Intl	117p
Norwich Union (200)	332p
Powdermill Pharms	202p
Primesight	140p
Robinsons Meritt	110p
Royalblue Group	211p
SBS Group	112p
SGS Group	15p
Versatile Group	3p

RIGHTS ISSUES

Benchmark Gp n/p	16p
Dragon Inn n/p (15)	1p
Dragon Inn n/p (15)	1p
Marlynebank Warrick	4p
Midland Hides n/p (1)	1p
Waterfall Hides n/p	5p

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:	
Pharm	335p (+35p)
AEA Tech	224p (+18p)
AEA Tech	450p (+10p)
BT	501p (+22p)
Geosource Gp	280p (+12p)
Flextech	703p (+21p)
Andrew Sykes	580p (+10p)
FALLS:	
Denby Gp	158p (-16p)
Paton	347p (-28p)
Hornby	223p (-15p)
Thistle Hotels	149p (-10p)
Legal & Gen	489p (-28p)
LucasVarity	192p (-10p)
Orford Int	310p (-18p)
DCS Gp	238p (-11p)
GKN	920p (-39p)
Tesco	394p (-12p)

Closing Prices Page 40

The price of control

IT IS scarcely surprising that shareholders in Argent are hoping mad. Property developers rely on the deal-making skills of their top management but after only three years on the market, the Freeman brothers who run Argent have decided they have had enough of public companies. Their departure in a year's time risks changing the whole nature of Argent. As a consequence, control of this highly regarded company is being sold to the BT pension fund for only 375p a share, one sixth below yesterday morning's opening price.

Shareholders are faced with the choice of accepting this disappointing offer, or continuing to hold shares in a company where their views will count for little. BT funds will end up owning at least 40 per cent of Argent and probably much more. Instead of an entrepre-

neurially managed developer, Argent will be run according to the dictates of BT's mature (and therefore security-minded) pension fund. The undoubted quality of the assets, which include the Brindleyplace complex in central Birmingham, is little consolation when investors do not know who will be running Argent in two years time. No wonder the board has held back from advising shareholders on what action they should take.

The institutions may prevail upon Hermes, the BT pension fund manager, to make a better offer - though looking back to Hermes's tilt at Greycoat a few years ago, this is unlikely to be successful. Shareholders may eventually have to accept that even 375p is well above the 250p at which the company floated in May 1994. Still, one suspects we have not heard the last of this one.

Thorn

THORN's latest provision, this time to pay for quitting the domestic rental business, is much of continental Europe, serves to underline the extent to which the company is on the defensive.

Thorn has already shut 90 of its Radio Rentals shops in the UK. A few weeks ago, it set aside £17.1 million to cover the potential cost of litigation in Minnesota, just one of the states where it faces legal challenges. For the European closures, it has set aside £30 million.

In this case, the cash impact of the provision will probably be more than offset by operating cash flow during the two to three year withdrawal period.

But, while closing these operations looks the right thing to do, it does not help to solve the basic Thorn problems.

Mirror Group

THE Mirror Group has become the victim of its own success.

David Montgomery, who arrived when the company was on the verge of collapse in 1992, has been a masterful manager and cost cutter and squeezing the margins for an extra point or two would be like squeezing blood from a stone.

Expanding the business has also become difficult. The Mirror already controls 23 per cent of the national newspaper market and would have trouble buying more under the current regulations. The high market share also prevents it from controlling an ITV company.

So what are Montgomery's options? He is largely by necessity, pushing the edge. There is a small cable-TV company and, as of yesterday, an agreement to buy Midland Independent Newspapers, the sixth largest regional player. There is an

admirable effort to expand in cable programming, but the reality is the Mirror does not have a lot to offer in this department.

You cannot blame Montgomery for trying. He is simply looking for a way to underwrite the Mirror's next stage of growth. But none of the deals so far is big enough to propel the group forward.

Newspapers, meanwhile, are in shallow but long-term decline and Mirror shares are underperforming the market. Do not be surprised if Montgomery eventually becomes exasperated and puts the company on the auction block.

praying high premiums to rent everyday items objectionable. Those objections could appear elsewhere.

The problems are now well-documented, but the management has failed to come up with a new strategy. In the absence of any take-over interest there is nothing to recommend the shares, cheap as they may appear.

Prudential was among the predators who had hoped to save a bit of money by concluding a friendly deal with Woolwich before conversion.

The paper value of the average Woolwich windfall has almost doubled in six months in a market that is looking increasingly overheated and after a strong run in the financial sector.

It could therefore be some time before speculative buyers of the shares see any take-over activity. The society's core business is likely to yield steady but unimpressive returns. It has the bulk of its business in the South East of England, where the recovery in the housing market has been strongest, but it still needs to diversify in order to survive in an overcrowded sector.

Woolwich

WHILE its fellow societies came to the market during a period of relative stability, Woolwich is floating after a week in which the FTSE 100 index gave shareholders a verger.

Analysts expect the new bank's opening price to hit

the 300p mark, with estimates as high as 325p a share. The latter price includes a bid premium of as much as 100p a share, which Woolwich's many suitors will balk at paying.

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MOVERS OF THE WEEK

Current	Week's	Handing back
Savemart	844p	£134m
Bridon	137p	£10m
National Power	549p	£10m
NatWest	887p	£10m
Thames Water	73p	£10m
IOE International	81p	£10m
PGA European Tour	51p	£10m
Amersham	225p	£10m
British Telecom	501p	£10m

Official (volume per day)

Copper Gdn A (Summit)	257.0-258.0
Zinc Spec H Gdn A (Summit)	146.5-147.5
Tin (Summit)	146.5-147.5
Aluminium H Gdn A (Summit)	1570.0-1580.0
Nickel (Summit)	68.0-69.0

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Zinc Spec H Gdn A (Summit)	146.5-147.5
Tin (Summit)	146.5-147.5
Aluminium H Gdn A (Summit)	1570.0-1580.0
Nickel (Summit)	68.0-69.0

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WEEKEND MONEY

ISA FANS 32

Financial adviser and son of Pep



PERSONAL FINANCE NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR



Young people will have to review their retirement planning after Gordon Brown's move to cut pension benefits

Young suffer most from cut in pension benefits

People in their 20s and 30s will be hardest hit by Budget changes that will drastically cut the value of pension benefits. It has emerged.

They may have to increase their contributions to personal and company pensions by between 20 and 30 per cent a year just to get the same pension in retirement after the Government's announcement on Wednesday that it was abolishing tax breaks on pension fund investments.

Experts estimate that the removal of the tax break will slice up to nearly three quarters of a percentage point off investment returns which have been around 9 per cent. Even on the most conservative estimate, this could cut the size of your pension by 15 per cent over 40 years, according to Mark Bolland of Chamberlain De Broe, the independent financial adviser.

Younger people will suffer most under the new regime because most or all of their money will be invested at the lower rate.

According to Charles Levett-Scrivener of Towry Law, a 35-year-old who has so far accumulated a fund of £20,000 on contributions of £1,000 a year could have expected this to turn into £467,849 at 65.

The extra tax cuts this to £419,360, a shortfall of £47,989. He would have to increase his contributions by nearly a quarter to £2,316 to make up for the shortfall on the fund he has already accumulated. On top of this

he would have to add a further £35.50 to his contribution to cover future shortfalls. He will have to pay an extra £35.10 a year to get the same pension in retirement as he could have counted on before the tax changes.

People in their 40s and 50s will be less badly affected but Mr Levett-Scrivener calculates that a 40-year-old paying £2,000 a year into a scheme in which a £50,000 fund has already accumulated will have to increase contributions by nearly a quarter.

A 60-year-old, with a fund of £200,000 and a £5,000 annual contribution, would still need to pay nearly 16 per cent more a year, a total of £852.20. If you have a personal pension or company pension with benefits based on contributions rather than final salary this will affect you.

If you are making additional voluntary contributions, the value of these will be hit.

So what should you do to cover the shortfall? Do the changes make other investments more attractive? Advisers are urging people to review their situation.

Trevor Llanwarne, partner and pensions specialist at Price Waterhouse, says: "The issue for individuals is that they should be looking at their whole pension arrangement. But they shouldn't do one

thing in isolation or react instantly to pressure."

Here are some possible moves:

- Boost your contributions with building society windfalls. If you have a personal pension and have no employer to help to plug the gap, you could put part of a demutualised building society or insurance company windfall into your pension in a lump sum.
- Review your Serps pension. The removal of tax breaks also calls into question the wisdom of contracting out of the state earnings related pension scheme (Serps) and into a personal pension, advisers say. National Insurance rebates diverted into personal pensions have recently been restructured to make it more attractive for older people to stay out of Serps.
- But as the value of pension investments falls at a stroke, many people may be better off returning to the state scheme unless rebates are raised to cover the shortfall.
- Find out if your employer is raising contributions to your company scheme. It will be up to an employer to raise his and your contributions to your company pension to bridge gaps.
- But Charles Evers, partner at KPMG, says many employers may do nothing. "They

may reach the view that the difference will disappear with the ups and downs of the investment market." If your employer does nothing, consider building up extra funds for retirement in a Pep (see below).

■ Diversify pension contributions into personal equity plans. If you are in a company pension scheme and are making additional voluntary contributions, consider investing your AVC money in a Pep instead.

Tax breaks on investment returns from Peps will continue until April 1998, boosting returns and potential, making Peps a more attractive option than AVCs. Trevor Llanwarne of Price Waterhouse, argues that the Budget changes have made Peps a serious rival to AVCs.

Both types of investment offer roughly even tax breaks. You get no tax relief on Pep contributions but investments roll up tax-free and you receive all income and capital gains tax-free.

You get tax relief on AVC contributions at your highest rate but you pay tax on the pension income.

The key difference now is that AVC funds will not get tax breaks, which will cut their investment returns. Mr Llanwarne says diverting contributions to Peps should be useful for people close to retirement, who will be able to take maximum advantage of the two-year window of opportunity on Peps.

SARA MCCONNELL

Swift response to Chancellor's raid

The Chancellor's raid on the £500 billion amassed by the nation in pensions was the most significant move in his Budget. The abolition of the dividend tax credit scheme, a Treasury subsidy to pension funds, will hit future investment returns, some estimate to the tune of £75 billion. The reaction to his attack on tax concessions was immediate and drastic.

Some companies moved immediately to downgrade pension arrangements for their employees - switching from schemes offering guaranteed benefits, based on a proportion of final salary to money-purchase schemes, where the size of the pension is linked directly to contributions made by the employer and the employee. In pensions jargon, they made the move from defined benefit arrangements to defined contribution arrangements. Others are likely to follow.

Unknown to the majority of those contributing to retirement schemes, pension scheme fund managers were able to claim back tax paid on dividends earned by the UK shares held by their funds. This tax credit was worth 20 per cent of the total dividend. The cut will affect the 12 million people who are members of occupational schemes. It will also hit seven million people who have personal pension plans. Hundreds of thousands of people in this last category are already in the process of being put back into their company schemes after being mis-sold personal pensions.

According to Maurice Fitz-

Caroline Merrell reports on the immediate reaction of companies to the abolition of the dividend tax credit scheme

patrick, a senior tax consultant at Chantrey Vellacott, depriving pension funds of about £3.5 billion a year will require increased contributions of about £190 annually on behalf of 19 million people who are either members of a company scheme or have a personal pension. Here *The Times* analyses the overall impact of the change.

What will the impact be on final salary schemes?

Gordon Brown claims that many final salary schemes have substantial surpluses that can be used to cushion the effect of the tax credit change. However, the National Association of Pension Funds says that 40 per cent of company schemes could be technically insolvent after the change.

How will the companies react to this raid on their pensions?

Under the Pensions Act, final salary schemes must muster sufficient funds to meet their eventual liabilities. Many companies will

have to increase the contributions to their schemes to make up the shortfall.

What about the impact on personal pensions and money-purchase company schemes?

The seven million personal pension holders and the three million members of money-purchase schemes will be among the worst hit. These schemes do not have guaranteed benefits, so in order to make up the shortfall after the change to the tax credit, participants have to increase their contributions, by as much as 10 per cent.

As 90 per cent of people retire on less than the two thirds of final salary allowed by the Inland Revenue, increasing contributions is probably a good idea in any case. Members of occupational schemes can contribute 15 per cent of earnings a year in to their pensions, while those with personal pensions can contribute between 17.5 and 40 per cent a year depending on their age.

Pensions still represent a

very tax-efficient way of saving.

Are certain types of schemes going to be more affected than others?

Those schemes and plans that are predominantly invested in UK equities are going to be those that are affected the most. Pensions for younger people will tend to have a high UK equity content. As people move towards retirement, pensions tend to switch more into fixed-interest securities such as gilts and corporate bonds.

Will pension fund managers themselves try to make up the shortfall?

Pension fund managers are among the biggest investors in the UK stock market. It is conceivable that they will put pressure on the companies to increase their dividends to make up for the loss of the tax relief. Pension fund managers may also switch their money into fixed-interest securities and overseas equities.

What will happen to the annuity market?

Annuities, which provide the monthly income for those retiring, will also suffer as a result of the change. Annuity yields are linked to the yields provided by gilts.

Peter Quinton, managing director of the Annuity Bureau, said he thought that in the long term annuity rates would fall. He said: "As more investors buy up gilts, the income will fall."

WEEKEND MONEY is edited by Anne Ashworth

Dark brown day for savers

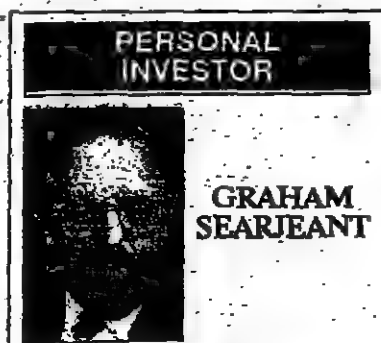
The morning after Gordon Brown's first Budget, power, water, bank and supermarket shares boomed; shares in high-tech exporters, engineers and most other manufacturers sank. This was not entirely what he would have wished.

Many more reactions to the Budget are likely to prove as perverse, from the Chancellor's point of view. He wants companies to pay out less of their profits in dividends and plough more back into investment. Pension funds will want companies in mature industries to raise their dividends faster to compensate for the loss of dividend credits in the Budget. So will holders of personal equity plans and charities such as the Wellcome Foundation. The cut in corporation tax will help.

Food retailers have immediately been targeted because most can raise dividends strongly and face constraints on their usually high level of investment. Similar logic applies to some banks.

In the long run, the new tax signals may have the effect the Chancellor desires. He believes lower payout ratios are good for the economy. There is little evidence that they are good for investors. In the short-term, at least, the impact will be the other way, in the case for higher dividend income, income-seeking investors should favour mature domestic sectors. This bias will come at the expense of small high-tech growth stocks that need to plough back profits and big groups with high earnings from abroad. They will find it more expensive to raise equity capital.

At the other end of the spectrum,



PERSONAL INVESTOR

GRAHAM SEARJEANT

holders of preference shares are among the worst losers from the Budget. Fixed return preference shares feature in many high-yield income trusts but the market for them is driven partly by pension funds and charities. For funds, the appeal lay in their ability to claw back dividend tax on preference shares from the Inland Revenue. This appeal is now lost.

Many split-level investment trusts, often used as a base for personal equity plans, incorporate preference shares. The Budget should kill off new issues of split level trusts: it showed the risks of any vehicle with an inflexible capital structure that relies on tax rules operating at the time. Powerful pension funds will doubtless press companies that issued preference shares, including banks and utilities needing a euphemism for cash distributions, to redeem them if they can afford to.

There are relative winners too. Howard Flight of Guinness Flight Hambro

argues that the Chancellor has sent a clear signal to private investors that he intends to penalise the income-seeking equity investor. There is no such penalty on the bond funds in which his firm specialises, because they rely on interest not dividends for their income. Those considering buying corporate bond Peps for income should go ahead. With short-term interest rates rising, more companies are likely to be asking bond investors for money.

Long-term gilt-edged stocks should also do well if Budget projections are believed, in part because pension funds will buy more to top up solvency ratios. But yields are already down to 7 per cent and will not make you a fortune.

Savers relying on conventional equity Peps should not panic ahead of the unveiling of the unknown new scheme next year. But there seems little incentive for investors who are not liable to higher rate income tax to take up this year's allocation.

Cash deposit rates are becoming more attractive. This doubles the incentive to put the money into one or more building societies in the hope of further conversion windfalls, unless you regard this as anti-social. Many savers may also think this transition year is the moment to divert savings to improvements that will raise the value of your house. If these developments accelerate consumer spending and house prices, the Chancellor knows who to blame.

Next spring, Mr Brown promises to review tax on capital gains. If you have any, use your allowance while it lasts.

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ANNE ASHWORTH
Personal Finance Editor

In preparation for Isa's debut, the

The Chancellor could argue that Pop investors have benefited from a decade's worth of tax exemption. But he appears to have overlooked those borrowers putting cash into Peps to

Mr Brown does have the chance to redeem himself. The review of the pension system, to be published later this month, should acknowledge the dismay caused by the abolition of the dividend tax credit. It should set out

Many believe that the Government should require us to make compulsory contributions to our pensions. But he must explain how this can be afforded after his tax raid.

CAN it be Rowan Atkinson, certainly not George Clooney but entertaining enough in the TV advert? Is it the familiar blue and gold logo? Or is it just sheer apathy that keeps eight million people faithful to Barclaycard. This week Barclaycard raises its annual percentage rate to 22.90 per cent — 10 per cent more than many competitors. So, if you borrow £1,000 over six months with Barclaycard, it will cost you £113, but just £69 at People's Bank. Apathy costs.

He believes that holders of

However, according to Philip Cartwright of London &

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AND NATHAN YATES**

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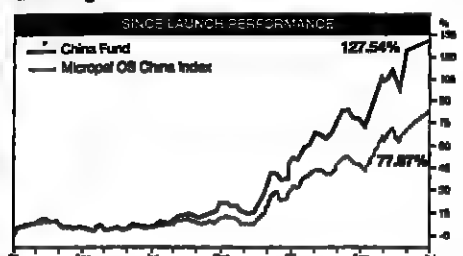
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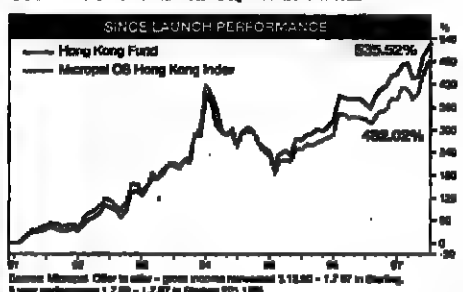
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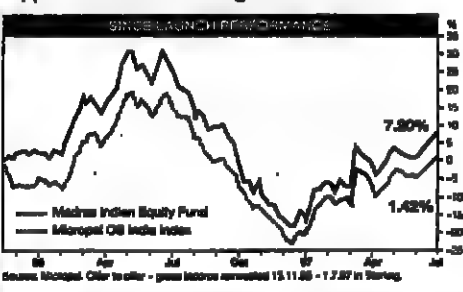
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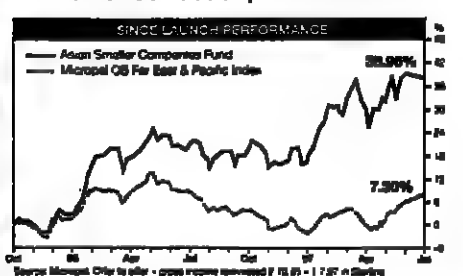
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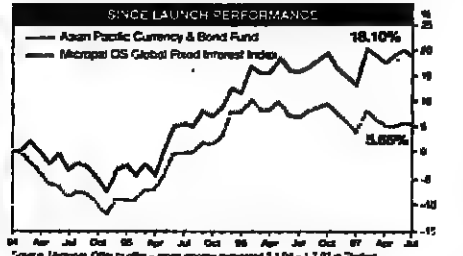
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Gareth Marr will be one of the first in the queue when the new individual savings accounts (Isas) go on sale in two years' time. "I'm looking forward to putting all my tax-free savings into one simple account" he said (Sara McConnell writes).

He confesses he is not one of Gordon Brown's prime targets, having already invested his full allowances in existing personal equity plans (Peps) and tax-exempt special savings accounts (Tessas).

for this tax year, as he does every year. One of the Government's main aims in launching Isas is to make saving more attractive, particularly for those on lower incomes.

So far there are few details of the new account but Mr Marr, a financial adviser from Buckinghamshire, is hoping he will be able to roll his Pep and Tessa into the new account and hold all the investments in one plan.

Under current complex rules, this is not possible because Tessas are deposit accounts, while Peps hold bonds and shares. Savers can invest £9,000 a year in Peps and £9,000 into Tessas over five years and receive income and gains tax free. His daughter, who has just left school before starting university this autumn, is also planning to be one of the first Isa savers. Sian Marr has just turned 18 and so is allowed to invest in Peps and Tessas for the first time.

Consultation period will be crucial for Isas

Karen Zagor says there is unease about the new savings vehicle

The investment lexicon welcomed a new word this week when the Chancellor unveiled his plans to introduce a new generation of savings products. Individual savings accounts (Isas), in spite of their less than inspiring name, are intended to appeal to a larger sector of the population than personal equity plans (Peps) and tax-exempt special savings accounts (Tessas).

Only half the adult population of Britain has any savings at all, and less than 13 per cent are Pep or Tessa holders. If the Chancellor succeeds with his plans, we will all have Isas, allowing us to build up enough in savings to cover expenses in illness and old age instead of relying on the State. In theory, Isas will incorporate the best elements of Peps and Tessas while avoiding their pitfalls. The specifics will

not be available until next year, after a consultation period, but enough was revealed in the Budget to get an outline of what to expect from Isas. In spite of the Government's best efforts, some of the details are already causing a degree of investor unease. Tax breaks are the main advantage of investing in a Pep or Tessa. Gains generated by a Pep or a Tessa held to maturity are not subject to capital gains or income tax. The formula will be extended to Isas, since Mr Brown has said that Isas will "provide a tax-favoured environment for savers". One of the charges that has been levelled against Peps is that they are designed to appeal to

the £9,000 ceiling is reached. When a Tessa matures after five years, only the original £9,000 investment can be rolled into a follow-on Tessa.

Unlike Peps and Tessas, Isas will probably include a wide range of savings vehicles under one roof. Advisers expect investors to be able to tailor Isas to suit their investment and risk requirements using a combination of cash, gilts and equities. It seems certain that Isas will have a minimum investment period, perhaps of five or ten years. This is already

causing concern among older savers who do not want to lock into a long-term savings plan in case they suddenly need access to their money. Since Isas are a means for people to look after themselves in old age, the Chancellor might want to consider waiving the minimum term for people of retirement age.

Days of the Pep are numbered as Chancellor ends tax break

The personal equity plan, devised in 1986 by Lord Lawson of Blaby, is unlikely to survive until the next century.

The Chancellor has dealt a death blow to this particular Tory savings incentive by abolishing one of its tax concessions while announcing the launch of the new Individual Savings Account. From April 1999 Pep holders will not be able to reclaim the 20p income tax on their dividends.

The income tax break is one of the primary reasons why Peps are purchased, as most people do not exceed the annual £6,500 limit for capital gains tax.

Dropping the tax credit entirely will lead to a 20 per cent cut in income for Pep holders. For example, £6,000 invested in a general Pep investing in a collection of the UK's biggest companies could generate gross

income of £210 a year, saving basic and lower rate taxpayers £42 a year in tax, and saving higher-rate taxpayers £84 per year. Cutting the 20 per cent tax credit would lead to a reduction in income of £42 per year. Instead of the £210 annual income, the Pep in the above example would pay £168 annual income.

Not all is lost, however. Corporate bond Peps, which generate income from fixed-interest securities, will not be affected. Managers of equity income funds are expected to start investing more in bonds to compensate for the expected loss in income.

The Chancellor also promised to reform capital gains tax in his next Budget. He wants to encourage long-term investment and may introduce a two-tier system to replace the current £6,500 threshold. How it would affect Peps is not clear.

In spite of this, Peps have done better than pension funds out of the Budget. The Chancellor removed the dividend tax credit from pension funds immediately. For this reason, if you are starting to save for retirement, it might be better to consider a Pep. They will give you 20 per cent higher returns for the next two years.

Most commentators reckon on the Chancellor is preparing to kickstart the launch of the individual savings account (Isa) with the removal of the tax credit as the new account will doubtless be completely tax-free. There is no point in shunning Peps and Tessas as figures from the Inland Revenue indicate that investors will be able to transfer all their money into the Isa when it arrives.

Charles Levitt, Scrivener of Towry Law, the financial adviser, urges investors not to "abandon" the Pep. "People should still maximise their Pep savings because in the long run equities outperform gilts and deposits by around 6 per cent a year. The big gain comes from investing in equities. The tax benefits are still good, just not as good as before." He also points out that investing in a Pep avoids filling in a self-assessment form.

Elsewhere, the Budget contained a small measure to help gift investors. From April 6, next year, they can receive their interest from the Bank of England paid gross.

This brings gifts in line with National Savings. This could save a small amount but will involve more paperwork when working out your tax liability. More significantly, the Bank has cut the number of gift auctions this year from 11 to nine after the Chancellor forecast a cut in government borrowing.

An indirect benefit of the Budget for savers is that the Bank is widely expected to raise interest rates again in a bid to rein in the growth in consumer spending. One-year guaranteed income bonds are already rising as a result.

In the only other measure of substance for investors, the Budget cracked down on enterprise investment schemes and venture capital trusts. Introduced by the Conservatives, EIS and VCTs were designed to encourage investment in small unquoted companies by offering generous tax breaks.

However, an increasing number of schemes have been invested in property development or arranged guaranteed payouts from banks in an attempt to reduce the risk to investors. The Government believes these break the spirit of the rules and has announced a review.

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China on their Mings

Conal Gregory says dealers see
oriental art prices rising after
China's takeover of Hong Kong



As always, watch out for fakes — a real Yuan dynasty vase is on the left and a 'copy' that can trap the unwary

China's takeover of Hong Kong will prompt a surge in prices for Chinese antiques, according to specialists in oriental art. Michael Goedhuis, a leading London expert in this field, predicts collectors will be chasing after a shrinking supply of pieces. "It will not be possible to buy freely in Hong Kong as in the past," he explains.

For years, Britain has been the centre for Chinese study and trade with top collections, such as the Percival David Foundation at London University and Oxford's Ashmolean Museum. Large auctions have been planned from here, and this year has seen a boom in activity. Including the Hong Kong sale of a Qing dynasty bowl for £1.7 million in April.

In China, there are spectacular ceramic collections in Beijing's Forbidden City and in a new gallery in Shanghai, though many quality pieces are closed to public view in the Museum of History in Tiananmen Square.

For collectors, it is vital to identify genuine articles. Over

the past year, prices have leapt ahead for top quality Chinese artefacts, but have not even kept pace with inflation for lesser pieces. Always ask auctioneers or dealers for the source.

A good provenance can boost the price. For example, one Ming blue and white saucer from the Wanli period (1573-1619) was formerly in the Alfred Clark collection. Five years ago, it would have cost £8,000, but today it is offered at £14,000 by Roger Keverne, a dealer in Mount Street, London.

Cloisonné of 15th and 16th centuries is rare and highly valued, but pieces from later periods are locked in a weak market, according to Sotheby's Canton and Peking painted enamels of the early 18th century — Yongzheng era — have not changed price for ten years and are now tipped as bargains by Mr Keverne, who says that high quality jade animals are also rising in value.

Jade carvings reached top prices in the late 1980s when Taiwanese collectors were

buying. In ceramics, look for the high quality decorative work made before Tang Ying died in 1756. He was superintendent of the Jingdezhen kilns and ensured fine output.

The period most neglected until three years ago was the "Warring States" to Han dynasty (403BC to AD220). Here the simpler forms have now come into fashion with an 18th century bronze vessel costing £10,000. Mr Goedhuis says "no fakes of this period are known", largely because the patination is difficult to imitate.

From horses to ceramics and jade, there are many fakes and most originate in China. Three tips for investors to avoid expensive mistakes: use the expertise of a dealer who belongs to the British Antique Dealers' Association (where there is a redress if a problem occurs); secure a dealer to buy on your behalf at auction or commission; have a test on ageing undertaken.

The latter is particularly useful for unglazed articles, and is carried out by Oxford Authentication, at Wantage, Oxfordshire (tel 01235 770998).

Caroline Merrell considers the reunification of Taiwan

The wayward child grows up

Taiwan can be viewed as the oldest and most wayward of China's children. The emerging economy with a population of 22 million is now under increasing pressure to return to China after 48 years of separation. However, while culturally Taiwan is predominantly Chinese, half a decade of independence has seen the economies and politics of China and Taiwan move in remarkably different directions. The original Taiwanese Kuomintang, led by Chiang Kai-shek, which in 1949 claimed to be effectively the Chinese Government in exile, has gradually ceded to a more open democratic regime, while the Government of the People's Republic of China, which forced the KMT into Taiwan, has remained communist.

The treatment of Hong Kong by the Chinese after this week's handover is being watched keenly in Taipei. If Hong Kong fares well under Chinese rule, then Taiwan may be more disposed towards reunification. However, the political parties favouring reunification did badly in the most recent Taiwanese elections. Most analysts believe the Taiwanese Government favours a retention of the status quo with China.

For UK investors, Taiwan should be seen as offering high risks but potentially high rewards. Over the past year, the Taiwanese market has risen about 27 per cent, and nearly 40 per cent over three years. Those willing to take the risk should choose funds that invest in other Far East emerging markets such as Malaysia and Thailand.

The companies quoted on the Taiwan market now have a total market capitalisation that is greater than that of the companies quoted on the Hong Kong market. Profits for most of Taiwan's industries are generated domestically — its biggest trading partner is China, with whom it enjoys cordial relations. The 390 companies traded on the Taiwan market are mainly in the



banking sector. However, Richard Firth, a Schroder fund manager, said electronics companies have recently begun to overtake financials as the largest quoted sector.

The phrase "Made in Taiwan" is no longer associated with cheap plastic goods — PCs and other complicated electronic items now come from the region, many considered to be high quality. Hitachi and Philips are among two big companies that use Taiwan as a manufacturing base.

Mr Firth said: "The country has a well-regulated labour force. The number of quoted companies has doubled since the Eighties as the Government has begun to recognise the need for opening up the market to foreign investment." Although controls do exist on the amount foreigners can invest in Taiwanese shares, more deregulation is in the pipeline. Schroder offers an offshore single-country fund investing in Taiwan, with a minimum \$1,000 investment. It also has exposure to Taiwan through its Far Eastern funds.

Clementine Sze, a researcher with HSBC, which has about £4 billion invested in Taiwan, is optimistic about the future. She believes Taiwanese companies will find it easy to exploit the economic emergence of China. She said: "The attractions of China as a destination for Taiwanese investment are obvious: proximity, similar cultural and linguistic heritage and the sheer size of the domestic market." However, she added:



Wayward children: Young Taiwanese wait to put on a sports display in Taipei

"Concerns over the Taiwanese economy becoming increasingly dependent on China loom large. A recent call by President Lee of Taiwan for restraint on making investments in China has left many wondering about the relationship between the two."

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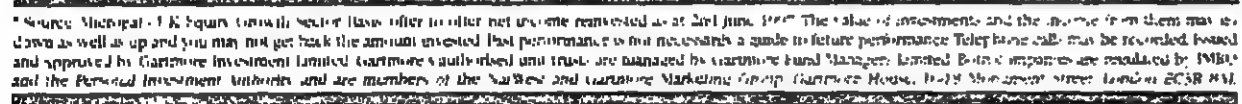
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SCOTTISH WIDOWS



A black and white photograph of a large, multi-story commercial building, identified as the Commercial Union Trust Co. The building features a central entrance with a prominent archway and is flanked by wings with numerous windows. Two vintage automobiles from the early 20th century are parked on the street in front of the building. The image has a grainy, historical quality.

Where it all began: the Woolwich Equitable Society's headquarters in Woolwich was built in 1934 at a cost of £120,000

When the Woolwich shares start trading bright and early on Monday morning, many members will still feel they are being kept in the dark. *The Times* has been inundated with calls and letters from irate Woolwich members who have not received their share certificates in time for the first day of trading or who are still disputing their share allocation. "The impression I have received, both from the helpline and from my local office, is that the conversion office is in impenetrable purdah and — one strongly suspects — in a great deal of confusion," writes Mr Rosenfeld from Chingford, Essex.

ety is unable to account for the problems but says there has been a problem with the post. "I think the Post Office is having problems with the size of the mailing," a spokesman said. "It took three weeks for someone in head office to get their share certificate through the mail."

Although the spokesman is quick to reassure members that anyone entitled to shares will receive them, it would be prudent for all Woolwich members to double-check to make sure they are receiving the correct number of shares.

Many readers have discovered that the Woolwich telephone helpline is of little actual help. "The Helpline is a BT service and it can only answer questions on the script," a spokesman said. This is of little help when people have specific questions about their accounts. Instead, they should write to the Woolwich Conversion Information Office: P.O. Box 79h, Sidcup, Kent DA14 6ZZ. The society says every letter will be checked and investigated.

With trading starting on Monday, the society will have to move quickly. Some brokers will allow investors to trade without having a share certificate at hand, but many insist on the certificate.

And it is impossible for investors to sell their stake if the number of shares to be received is still in dispute.

The absence of share certificates could also cause problems for people wishing to sell their shares. Unless the Woolwich acts quickly, this could cause some sleepless nights because members only have until August 17 to put the shares into a PEP. After that, they will have to sell the shares and buy them back if they want a PEP wrapper on the investment.

Shares are expected to be priced between 312p and 320p a share when they start trading on Monday according to the unofficial grey market run by IG Index, the bookmaker. This marks a decline from the opening grey market price of 332p to 340p a share on June 17. At present levels, the minimum allocation of 450 shares should be worth about £1,400.

At that price, brokers are divided about what to do with the shares. NatWest Stockbrokers suggests selling, noting that the Woolwich could have trouble maintaining its independence in the long term. Solomon Brothers, on the other hand, recommends holding the shares, on the basis that the Woolwich has strong regional mortgage and savings businesses.

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Cover up for summer — the forecast's wet



Cooling the blood 1997-style: festivalgoers at Glastonbury could not obtain refunds for the weather conditions, but these two did not seem to mind

The dismal weather has lost many people huge sums, but insurance is available, Nathan Yates says

The traditional wet British summer is returning with a vengeance, and downpours are already drowning out whole sections of the sporting calendar.

The Meteorological Office announced this week that last month was the wettest June since 1860, with more than twice the average rainfall. July and August are normally the dampest summer months, and forecasters predict a soggy holiday period. The rain which washed out Wimbledon, Ascot and the Lord's Test match is likely to return.

Buying tickets for outdoor events in this country is something of a gamble. An outing for a family of four at today's Wimbledon final will cost over £200, and tickets for the Old Trafford Test match today reach more than £30 each. If the rain falls this weekend, sodden spectators may feel that money as well as water is pouring down the drain.

Fortunately, there are ways to prevent the washout from lightening your wallet. Several events carry their own weather compensation packages.

At Wimbledon, tickets are refunded in full if there is no play, and half the price is returned if balls are not struck before 6pm. With cricket, regulations state that tickets will be fully refunded if fewer than ten overs are bowled on any day of a Test match. If more than ten overs but fewer than 25 overs are bowled, ticket holders can recoup half of their outlay.

However, this level of compensation provision is expensive, and there are many events where insurance against the weather is lacking. At Ascot, drenching conditions failed to secure racegoers any return.

At Glastonbury rock music festival the average £74 ticket comes without any guarantees of poor weather repayment. On a smaller scale, village fêtes, weddings and open-air theatre productions are habitually without weather insurance.

If you have a large stake in an outdoor occasion, it could be worth taking out your own foul weather policy. Eagle Star provides a policy known as "pluvius" which insures

against adverse conditions. Pluvius, which means "rain" in Latin, can be tailored to individual needs. Its most popular form pays out a specified sum if an agreed amount of rain falls during the period of cover.

A rain gauge is provided with each policy to determine whether a payout is warranted, and to prevent any cheating rainfall must be monitored by an observer of assumed integrity, such as a vicar, policeman or JP.

John Lear, Eagle Star's weather insurance underwriter, issues strict instructions on how the gauge is to be used. It must be placed on level ground, away from trees and buildings, out of the reach of children and particularly beyond the range of dogs.

An alternative type of pluvius policy is available to insure cricket matches against the hazards of waterlogged pitches or gloomy light. These are taken out by caterers and corporate entertainers as well as by village cricket clubs.

In addition, a policy can be obtained to insure against the weather-induced abandonment of an event. This extends to a wider range of weather conditions, including high winds, snow and frost.

One of the more curious sample beneficiaries from a pluvius policy was a fishing contest which could not take place because not enough rain fell.

Mr Lear says pluvius policies are growing in popularity, with about 2,700 policies now being sold annually. Eagle Star has this week been working overtime to deal with compensation claims. However, although pluvius may be an attractive option for those with a large investment exposed to the elements, the minimum premium of £104 would not be worthwhile for the average family on a summer outing.

Customers must take out their policies 14 days in advance, so there is no opportunity to take advantage of a poor forecast. It seems that for many of this summer's disappointed trippers, even financial services cannot provide a way to beat the British weather.

Investors to vote on putting their trust in an Oeic

More than 200,000 unit trust investors with Allied Dunbar and Eagle Star Threadneedle are initiating a three-phase merger and conversion of the unit trusts between now and November. For instance, a new UK corporate bond sub-fund will be created from three Allied Dunbar and two Eagle Star unit trusts. Unit trust holders will be invited to meetings at which Threadneedle will need a 75 per cent vote for the changes to go ahead.

What is in it for investors? As an Oeic, TIF will generally charge slightly less in initial and annual management fees than the unit trusts. It will also quote a single price, regardless of whether investors are buying or selling. This is less confusing than the buy and sell prices usually quoted by unit trust managers. Investors will also become shareholders, which gives them slightly more rights than if they stayed unit holders.

TIF, holding £4.7 billion of investors' money, will have just 23 new sub-funds, compared with 38 unit trusts currently used by Allied Dunbar and Eagle Star. Threadneedle is initiating a three-phase merger and conversion of the unit trusts between now and November. For instance, a new UK corporate bond sub-fund will be created from three Allied Dunbar and two Eagle Star unit trusts. Unit trust holders will be invited to meetings at which Threadneedle will need a 75 per cent vote for the changes to go ahead.

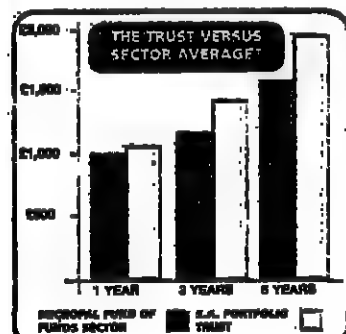
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165	100	10.0	124	13	4.9
166	100	10.0	125	14	5.0
167	100	10.0	126	15	5.1
168	100	10.0	127	16	5.2
169	100	10.0	128	17	5.3
170	100	10.0	129	18	5.4
171	100	10.0	130	19	5.5
172	100	10.0	131	20	5.6
173	100	10.0	132	21	5.7
174	100	10.0	133	22	5.8
175	100	10.0	134	23	5.9
176	100	10.0	135	24	6.0
177	100	10.0	136	25	6.1
178	100	10.0	137	26	6.2
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188	100	10.0	147	36	7.2
189	100	10.0	148	37	7.3
190	100	10.0	149	38	7.4
191	100	10.0	150	39	7.5
192	100	10.0	151	40	7.6
193	100	10.0	152	41	7.7
194	100	10.0	153	42	7.8
195	100	10.0	154	43	7.9
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197	100	10.0	156	45	8.1
198	100	10.0	157	46	8.2
199	100	10.0	158	47	8.3
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201	100	10.0	160	49	8.5
202	100	10.0	161	50	8.6
203	100	10.0	162	51	8.7
204	100	10.0	163	52	8.8
205	100	10.0	164	53	8.9
206	100	10.0	165	54	9.0
207	100	10.0	166	55	9.1
208	100	10.0	167	56	9.2
209	100	10.0	168	57	9.3
210	100	10.0	169	58	9.4
211	100	10.0	170	59	9.5
212	100	10.0	171	60	9.6
213	100	10.0	172	61	9.7
214	100	10.0	173	62	9.8
215	100	10.0	174	63	9.9
216	100	10.0	175	64	10.0
217	100	10.0	176	65	10.1
218	100	10.0	177	66	10.2
219	100	10.0	178	67	10.3
220	100	10.0	179	68	10.4
221	100	10.0	180	69	10.5
222	100	10.0	181	70	10.6
223	100	10.0	182	71	10.7
224	100	10.0	183	72	10.8
225	100	10.0	184	73	10.9
226			185	74	11.0

Essex fails to cope with Shrimpton

Essex failed to cope with Shrimpton's powerful batting in the first innings of the first Test at Trent Bridge, Nottingham, on Saturday. The Essex batsmen were out for 100 runs in 40 overs, with Shrimpton scoring 50 runs. The Essex bowlers were unable to contain Shrimpton's batting, and the Essex batsmen were out for 100 runs in 40 overs. The Essex bowlers were unable to contain Shrimpton's batting, and the Essex batsmen were out for 100 runs in 40 overs.

Essex keeps Morgan in command

Essex kept Morgan in command in the first Test at Trent Bridge, Nottingham, on Saturday. Morgan scored 50 runs in the first innings, and Essex kept him in command throughout the match. Morgan's batting was a key factor in Essex's success, and he was out for 50 runs in 40 overs.

Kent to enter

Kent is to enter the first Test at Trent Bridge, Nottingham, on Saturday. Kent's batting is expected to be a key factor in the match, and they are expected to score 50 runs in the first innings. Kent's bowlers are also expected to be a key factor in the match, and they are expected to take 50 wickets in the first innings.

Essex appointed to

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SPORT

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CRICKET

Essex fail to cope with Shine

By IVO TENNANT

CHELMSFORD (third day of four): Somerset (24pts) beat Essex (6) by ten wickets

ESSEX are supposed to be the county championship table. Somerset, when without their two leading bowlers, are supposedly one of the more feckless of the first-class counties. Not so yesterday, for they won by the quite unexpected margin of ten wickets and with a day to spare.

Kevin Shine, who has revitalised his career at his third and most welcoming club, took five for 72 in the Essex second innings and eight wickets in the match.

It is hard to glean just why Essex, who were bowled out for 129 yesterday, batted so indifferently in this match. They did not have to contend with Caddick or Mustaqim Ahmed, one of whom was with England and the other injured. Shine, Rose and Kerr did not make for the most formidable attack in the country.

Yet still they bowled Essex out. The captain went in the opening over to the first ball he received and, with the exception of Stuart Law, there was a submission to the remainder of the batting.

Prichard was nearly taken by Turner, who scooped the ball up in front of first slip. This was the first wicket to be taken by Shine, whose tendency to be erratic works, perversely, to his advantage. The batsman never knows what is coming next.

There was a fair bit down the leg side, interspersed with the odd ball delivered at a fair pace on or outside off stump that swings away just sufficiently to catch the edge. Shine, having been awarded his county cap last month, after being released earlier in his career by both Middlesex and Hampshire, feels he has a future.

His other wickets were those of Gooch, leg-before-shuffling in front of his stumps. Danny Law, caught at second slip, Rollins, playing on, and Robinson, who came in down the order because of a bruised thumb, taken at the wicket down the leg side.

Shine's match figures were eight for 145 and throughout, it should be noted, the conditions afforded him minimal assistance.

On one occasion, Stuart Law, whose 55 runs came off 56 balls, effortlessly flicked for six a ball that Shine speared down the leg side. Yet he, too, contrived to bring about his own dismissal.

Having batted with an ease that suggested a large score was in the offing, he attempted to late-cut Kerr and edged to first slip. It is facile to say he needs to bat against a more challenging attack than this, but, at times, that was apparent.

Kerr also removed Irani, who was caught, Australian style, by Shine at long leg. Rose, who had made useful runs earlier in the day, had Grayson well taken by Holloway at cover, the catch judged to perfection over his shoulder. Rose also finished off the ball, giving him figures of three for 22.

Somerset were left to make a mere 21 to win. Their victory was brought about not least by their diligent and at times positive batting in the morning. Turner finished unbeaten with 80, an innings which included six fours and a six over long-on off such. They are unlikely to finish in the higher echelons of the championship table, but this was a triumph to relish.

On Wednesday, they elected to field — inexplicably — dawdled through their overs and subsequently their batting crumbled against some tidy Nottinghamshire bowling. However, they did, narrowly, save the follow-on and, with it, the match.

As the tourists struggled to find their feet, the scoring rate declined to two an over and the few paying spectators were indebted to Azhar Mahmood for raising the tempo with an attractive unbeaten 50 from 112 balls.

A seventh-wicket stand of 66 between Azhar and Javed Qadir seemed to be indicating a recovery before Matthew Downman inspired a collapse with career-best figures of three for ten, leaving the last wicket pair to nervously reach 100.

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At least Middlesex saw off the new ball the second time around. Kallis was quickly on to the back foot to pull anything short, yet both he and Weekes showed early vulnerability against the spinners and, when Weekes edged to Fairbrother at slip, it was merely the culmination of a difficult period.

Ramparkash followed his first innings' duck with just two before falling leg-before to Yates. Kallis, who struck two sixes in his 62, and Gattling departed in successive overs to catches at silly mid-off with the score on 112.

Few batsmen in these circumstances beguile dismissal as much as Brown. He can expect to graft the 10,000th run of his gritty career this month and, when he edged Martin to second slip, the whooping among the fielders was understandable. How Brown would have appreciated the innings by Fairbrother that underpinned Lancashire's total. He was three short of a deserved first hundred of the season when he gave a return catch to Hewitt.

Petres stuck it out for longest in making 29, by some way the highest score of the first innings, but fell cheaply second time around. At least Sussex reached three figures and showed a bit more backbone, though these things are relative. Drakes suffered the indignity of a second no-ball in the day, playing round a leg-stump yorker. It was an accurate commentary on the match.

Did Singh delay his closure in order to give Ratledge the opportunity of making a century? It was the only logical explanation. Ratledge duly reached his landmark, yet 20 minutes were lost and all the wrong signals were sent to Oxford.

Any possible chance Oxford had of reaching the eventual target, in two hours and the final 20 overs, was slender indeed once Wagh, still chasing, had been bowled, cutting at a yorker. He had made a brisk 47, but with the score at 189 for four, it then became a question of whether the last six Oxford wickets could hold out for the remaining 15 overs.

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Tufnell launches an animated but unsuccessful appeal for leg-before against Martin

Middlesex on brink of defeat

By RICHARD HOBSON

UXBRIDGE (third day of four): Middlesex, with four second-innings wickets in hand, need 101 runs to avoid an innings defeat by Lancashire

BARRING significant improvement, Middlesex will succumb to their first county championship defeat under the captaincy of Mark Ramprakash today. At no stage have they played like aspirants the tide and they have already relinquished the leadership that they held before this game — to Glamorgan — with Lancashire ready to capitalise on a sizeable advantage.

After extending their first innings to 417 for nine before declaring 299 runs ahead, Lancashire reduced Middlesex to 198 for six and enjoyed a third day of high achievement marred only by the broken thumb sustained by Titchard during fielding practice. Gary Yates found enough assistance for his off spin to prove a

considerable menace from the Town End, while Peter Martin completed his first ten-wicket haul in a match.

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Sheriyyar reveals in Sussex's misery

By JAMES ALLEN

ARUNDEL (third day of four): Worcestershire (22pts) beat Sussex (9) by an innings and 35 runs

WORCESTERSHIRE won much as they pleased yesterday evening, completing victory with a day to spare. It was a commanding display, built around the tireless bowling of Alamgir Sheriyyar, who added four second-innings wickets to the six he had claimed in the first.

Sussex humiliation is almost a habit. Their first innings score of 71 was a small improvement on two paltry totals in the thrashing by Glamorgan a week ago. Having resumed at 23 for three, they lost their last seven wickets in 24 overs. Bereft of confidence, every ball was an ordeal. It swung and seamed, occasionally leavily, and Sheriyyar, bowling left arm over at a brisk pace, asked the batsmen questions they were unable to answer.

Sheriyyar, 23, began his career at Grace Road and joined Worcestershire last season. He enjoyed his brightest moment in taking six Sussex wickets for 99 at New Road, although the opposition was very different to that which he faced here. Among his victims then were Wells, Salisbury and Danny Law, all now departed.

Sheriyyar's first-innings figures of six for 19 are his best in first-class cricket and there should be further improvement to come. This was his first ten-wicket haul in a match.

Sussex's plight is extreme. Even when they have a fully fit squad — Lenham, among the batsmen, is injured — it is hard to discern a truly competitive line-up. Athey is their unlikely champion, which is a tribute to his enduring ability, but also a sad reflection of the troubles of the club.

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RUGBY UNION: SOUTH AFRICA SEEK CONSOLATION

Clean sweep offers extra motivation for ambitious Lions

FROM DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT, IN JOHANNESBURG

THE last hurrah for the 1997 British Isles, as for any touring team reaching the end of the road, is a difficult one. Amid the hubbub of present-hubbing and social engagements, there remains an international match with South Africa to be won at Ellis Park here this evening.

The Lions, having taken a series-winning 2-0 lead, could be excused if their minds were not wholly on the job, but that has not been their way. They know that they have played exceptional rugby on this tour, they know too that they have not been able to reproduce it in the two internationals, save in the final quarter in Cape Town, and they would like to rectify that situation and leave South Africa on the highest possible note.

Already assured of their place in the history books of rugby, they would dearly love to succeed where the New Zealanders last year and, indeed, their own illustrious predecessors of 1974, failed and win the final international of the series to complete a clean sweep. History is against them: no team visiting South Africa has done that this century.

Yet seldom has such confusion reigned in South African ranks. Their run of injuries throughout the series was sustained this week

when André Joubert, their most experienced player, withdrew with a groin injury. His place at full back will go to Russell Bennett, a talented attacking player, as he demonstrated as a replacement on the wing in Cape Town, but apart from Joost van der Westhuizen, at scrum half, the back division can barely muster double figures in caps between them.

Boeta Wessels, the uncapped Free State stand-off half, has also withdrawn from the list of replacements, so Henry Honiball, dropped after the second international, returns to the squad. "We can't pass the buck around, responsibility rests with the coaching staff and with the team to produce results," Carel du Plessis, the coach, said. "A lot of hard work has been done and we must keep in mind the demanding programme we face."

The Lions themselves are not short of casualties, but they came together earlier this week and decided that, even with their objective achieved, the high standard that they have set themselves must be sustained.

It will involve an exceptional mental effort against a team desperate to recover pride and a degree of confidence to take with them into the tri-nations series with

New Zealand and Australia, which begins for them against the All Blacks in Pretoria in a fortnight.

To that extent, victory today should mean more to South Africa. They have not been beaten in six internationals at Ellis Park and it was on this ground, too, that the 1974 Lions met their only setback, a 13-13 draw that denied them a 4-0 whitewash in the series. There are, however, too many queries over the 1997 Springboks to assume that they will do the same.

Nor has Martin Johnson — who has withdrawn from the England squad for the international with Australia a week today to rest a groin injury — found difficulty in motivating his players on this tour. Johnson, as captain, has occupied a more peripheral role than some of his predecessors, a situation to which he takes no exception. Such is the nature of support staff in the professional era that Johnson's primary role has been to lead by example and, in concert with the half backs and key individuals such as Lawrence Dallaglio, tweak the tactical strings every now and again.

"The players are very responsible, they are professionals who know that if they look after the team, they look after their own livelihood," Johnson said. "After we had won the series in Durban, we agreed there was still work to be done. We had to come to terms with what we had achieved and decide our attitude for the final week, which was to try and end on a high."

But that comes from the players. We know that if we weren't a squad totally together, we wouldn't have a chance here and the pride over what we have done is no greater for me as captain than for any player.

"In South Africa, they all remember 1974 and Willie-John McBride. Hopefully after 1997, they will remember all the guys who played well, the games we played and the tries we scored."

Doddie Weir, who returned home after suffering serious ligament damage during the match with Mpumalanga on June 4, returned to South Africa yesterday to watch the final international. Weir, the Newcastle and Scotland lock, hopes to start training again in two months.

Cotton plants seeds of unity

Rob Hughes hears a call for Twickenham to spread the wealth of British Isles talent

Fran Cotton, whose indomitable personality has been transmitted into the marrow of the British Isles team, has not exhausted his own fires on the eight-week tour of South Africa. Today, the Lions could become the first visiting side in history to whitewash the Springboks: next Friday, he will be back in London in time for the annual meeting of the Rugby Football Union (RFU) and intends to drive forward, with the same force of personality, the same messages of British and Irish integration that are surging sporting history on playing fields abroad.

Cotton, a big roan in every sense, brooks no intimidation, no equivocation. He has overseen this tour like a father, avuncular or stern, depending on how he sees the need. He pulled the Lions together, selecting the coaches, Ian McGeechan and Jim Telfer, and then choosing each of the 35 players — 40, counting the five replacements called up during the tour — and bonding them closer than brothers for the mission of standing up to the ruthlessness of southern-hemisphere rugby, suppressing it and beating it remorselessly. It was as seen in Durban last Saturday, that had to be ground out with sheer guts and determination, defending the line until the kicker, Neil Jenkins, the Pontypridd boot, could kick South Africa down, then Cotton will not apologise.

He has led this tour with jaw-slitting principles, a tour that is the most professional and least social that any team from these Isles has undertaken. From it, his message to the lords of Twickenham is that English rugby owes something to the Celtic brotherhood of Ireland, Scotland and Wales, something that must be paid for in hard cash out of television negotiations and will be repaid by raising the standards of northern-hemisphere rugby, in the awesome way that the Lions are now demonstrating is possible.

Cotton has not forgotten the embarrassing way in which his appointment to manage this tour was conducted. "I was very excited when the initial approach came. Having played in the only Lions side to win a tour in South Africa, in 1974, the next best honour would be to manage a



Cotton's strength of character is reflected in the Lions' play

team to do the same. Having been asked to put my name forward, the RFU committee did not even have the courtesy to phone me and tell me that Billy Beaumont, who earlier had said he had too many commitments to lead the tour, had changed his mind."

In time, the three candidates — Beaumont, Cotton and the Scot, Duncan Paterson — were summoned to the East India Club in London and interviewed for the post. Even then, Cotton's uncompromising nature was through. Twice, in rancorous arguments with the rugby authorities over an

autobiography and then the rights to his shirt company business, which had transformed him from a Wigan miner's son to a millionaire, Cotton looked the committee gentlemen in the eye and demanded: "If you are looking for the traditional ambassador role, giving speeches, then I'm not your man. I would want to be accountable for all aspects."

Credit the committee for responding positively. Credit, as Cotton does, Ray Williams, the chairman of the four home unions' tour committee, who has supported him at every turn and

provided the resources to drive through the ultimate professional approach, an approach that many South Africans readily acknowledge could show them the way to regroup and to change their outmoded style.

François Pienaar, the captain of the 1995 World Cup-winners, the player-coach of Saracens but discarded by South Africa after requesting better terms — more money — for the players, said last week: "Churchill said it is only a fool that lives in the past. It's a bigger fool who doesn't go back into the past and learn from it."

Cotton emphasised that the relationship between the coaches, especially McGeechan, and players is the core to any touring side. As the initial selector of that coach and of each individual in the squad, it is Cotton who laid down the policy and the culture of the tour.

He expected each man to live and breathe winning rugby. "We had a belief that if you get a group of people with one common purpose, it's amazing what can happen," Cotton said. "I asked the players for five things: to play with more desire than South Africa, to show the right attitude in training and towards one another, to believe in themselves, to be smarter than opponents who might in some instances be bigger and, above all, to have discipline."

Cotton, dressing daily in the same style of tracksuit as his team, takes pride that not one player, not those on the receiving end of what he has twice labelled unacceptable brutality or those who made only the midweek team, has sulled or sided away from that collective responsibility.

Cotton's job in South Africa is all but done — at 50, he sees it as a one-off project — but the Lions, thanks to this successful tour, will prevail as a concept and seeing the disparate, squabbling home nations drawn together, brother to brother, Francis Edward Cotton has two big days ahead. First, on July 11, he intends to throw his considerable weight behind the RFU executive chairman, Cliff Brittle, insisting that England, rather than acting as the superior union, should assist in unification for the benefit of all.

And then? A weekend yet to be designated in August or September, a "bash" for this players, whose homecoming will not be a united celebration because the English among them are limping on towards a further leg in Australia. Cotton is coming home; the Union should take cover.

TODAY'S TEAMS AT ELLIS PARK

SOUTH AFRICA

R G Bennett (Border)
A H Strydom (Northern Transvaal)
P Montgomery (Western Province)
D van Schalkwyk (Northern Transvaal)
P W G Roseouw (Western Province)
J H de Beer (Free State)
J H van der Westhuizen (N Transvaal)
J P du Randt (Free State)
J Dalton (Gauteng)
J C Erasmus (Free State)
J C Erasmus (Free State)
K Otto (Northern Transvaal)
A G Venter (Free State)
G H Telchmann (Natal)

BRITISH ISLES

N R Jenkins (Pontypridd/Wales)
J Bentley (Newcastle/England)
I S Gibbs (Swansea/Wales)
J C Guscott (Bath/England)
T Underwood (Newcastle/England)
M J Catt (Bath/England)
M J S Dawson (Northampton/England)
T J Smith (Watsonians/Scotland)
M P Riegan (Bristol/England)
P S Wallace (Saracens/Ireland)
L B N Delleaglio (Wasps/England)
M O Johnson (Leicester/England)
J W Davidson (London Irish/Ireland)
N A Back (Leicester/England)
T A K Rodder (Northampton/England)

Referee: W Enderson (Australia)
Sky Sports 1: from 3.30pm
REPLACEMENTS: 15 T R G Stimpson (Newcastle/England), 17 A G Bateman (Richmond/Wales), 18 A Healey (Leicester/England), 19 B H Williams (Richmond/Wales), 20 D Young (Cardiff/Wales), 21 R A Hill (Saracens/England).

Back holds the key to treble chance

Rob Andrew highlights the players who can inspire the Lions to an historic achievement

HAVING won the series 2-0, it is inevitable that there has been a sense of anticlimax this week. Somehow, here in Johannesburg, the British Isles have got to find that extra edge that took them to victory in Cape Town and Durban when they were playing for their lives. It will not be easy.

In the first international, they were playing for respect; in the second, they were playing to win the series; today, the prospect of whitewashing South Africa 3-0 must be their inspiration — that, and wanting to play the way they played in the provincial games. There is a desire to show what they can do in an international.

The changes to the side will help because there are a few fresh faces who will be fired up. With Mike Catt at No 10,

Tony Underwood on the left wing and Neil Back on the flank, they have players who could spark the Lions into producing the rugby we have seen in the provincial games.

Back gives them security because he gets to the breakdown so quickly. Catt is on top of his game and probably playing as well as he ever has at stand-off half and, with the series won, it is tailor-made for him to stamp his mark on the match. With Underwood, you have extra pace out wide that may give Guscott and Gibbs that extra confidence to push the ball that bit further.

No one has ever doubted Back's ability; the question

mark has been whether he can perform at international level, given his size. Two things have helped him out here — one is the way that Ian McGeechan, the coach, has wanted the team to play, which has been right up his street; the other is the conditions out here.

The new laws played under these conditions have returned the game towards Back's type of player and he can now make a much bigger contribution. His hands are fantastic, he is very good on the floor at getting the ball and he puts the tackles in. His support work is the best of any back-row forward and he deserves his chance.

Catt is the type of player who makes things happen — a bit like Gregor Townsend. Sometimes they come off, sometimes they don't. When you have a player like that on top of his game, the chances are that more things will come off than not. He could well be the catalyst to bring out more of the football in this Lions team.

The South Africans are in worse shape than when they started the series. They have made four changes to the pack that played well in the second international, their two best forwards, Kruger and Andrews, are missing, they have changed the front row, they have a stand-off who is making his debut and now André Joubert has dropped out. The Lions are on a roll and there is more of an edge to their team than the Springboks.

CYCLING: BRITON DETERMINED TO MAKE HIS MARK IN TOUR DE FRANCE

Boardman banks on flying start

BY JEREMY WHITTE AND PETER BRYAN

CHRIS BOARDMAN starts his fourth Tour de France in Normandy this afternoon knowing that anything less than a top-ten finish in the three-week event is likely to end his hopes of winning professional cycling's most prestigious race.

The Merseysider may be the outstanding favourite to win the opening prologue time-trial through the streets of Rouen today and become the first to wear the leader's yellow jersey in the 84th Tour, but his future as a credible team leader hangs on his overall performance during the next 23 days.

"The pressure is on me for the prologue because I'm expected to win," he said yesterday. "Normally, I have got a terrible memory — I even forget my kids' birthdays — but I can remember the course for this prologue with my eyes closed."

Boardman, 28, made a remarkable debut in the Tour in 1994, claiming the yellow jersey with a record-breaking prologue ride in Lille. That win was seen as the platform for an eventual challenge at victory, but while there have been occasional glimpses of

that potential and his performance in time-trials has remained consistently high, he has failed to become recognised as the type of rider seen by the French as a "man of the Tour".

"I have put myself under pressure to achieve a good overall result this year. Frankly, it will be easier for me to win the prologue than to finish in the top ten in Paris," he said. "People keep biting off more than I can chew," he added wryly of the pressures on him to succeed, "but I don't fear the Tour de France anymore, not in the same way that I did last year. It's certainly daunting, but I am strangely looking forward to it."

The 7.3-kilometre prologue today is an appetiser for an

event that starts in earnest tomorrow, contested by 198 riders representing 22 teams. There is a record £1.5 million of prize-money this year, of which the overall winner (the rider with the lowest aggregate time) will pocket a minimum of £300,000, about £14,000 for every day in the saddle.

The winner is unlikely to bank much of his prize: most of it will be shared among his eight team riders — the domestiques, who will have attacked, defended, paced, fetched and carried on his behalf. The winner's reward will be in the form of higher contract money next season, better start money and additional revenue from a host of endorsements.

The 3,900-kilometre route that swings around France in an anti-clockwise direction (with one day in Switzerland) should favour the climbing specialists, dubbed "mountain goats" for their expertise in the difficult terrain that they will encounter in the Pyrenees and the Alps.

Bjarne Riis, the Dane who ended Miguel Indurain's astonishing sequence of five successive victories last year, is no mean climber even though his build is chunky, unlike most of his rivals,

whose racing weight hovers around 10½st.

He starts favourite, but it is almost as though he cannot shake off the shadow of the Spaniard who has so dominated the Tour: Abraham Olano, the 1995 world road champion from Spain, bears a remarkable resemblance to his compatriot and could prove to be the new Indurain. However, the Tour will not be merely a two-man race, certainly until the mountain stages are completed. Alex Zülle, runner-up to Indurain in 1995, has all the power and team support to win, but first he must conquer a propensity for falling off.

Should Riis falter, he has a likely successor in his teammate, Jan Ullrich, runner-up last year on his debut and only 1min 14sec behind. Ullrich has pledged to defend Riis and knows that, at 23, his ambitions can remain in check. On the decisive mountain stages, Richard Virenque, King of the Mountains last year for the third time, will figure large, as will Ivan Gotti, winner of the Tour of Italy, Peter Luttenberger, a professional for only two years, and Marco Pantani, sidelined last year after a serious accident. STAGE DEPART: Today, The prologue (7.30am); Rouen, tomorrow; Stage 1, Rouen to Fougères (122km).



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TENNIS

Novotna has heart set on winning return

By JULIAN MUSCAT, TENNIS CORRESPONDENT

THE teenager named after a Wimbledon legend today embarks on a preordained mission to forge a legend of her own. Martina Hingis, imbued on the exploits of Martina Navratilova, plays her first Wimbledon singles final against Jana Novotna, a beaten finalist in heart-rending circumstances four years ago. The urgency of youth is, thus, pitted against the clamour of sentiment.

Novotna will corner the affections of the Centre Court gallery after her defeat by Steffi Graf in 1993. If the tears she split on the Duchess of Kent's shoulder make an endearing sporting image, they have played too long on Novotna's brittle emotions. She held a point for a 5-1 lead in the third set before capitulating in spectacular fashion.

Nothing can better cleanse her mind than victory in the same arena. The prospect is encouraging. Novotna, 28, has been liberated by the absence of the injured Graf—who has won all five of her matches at Wimbledon. She approaches the match in excellent fettle, having beaten Arantxa Sánchez Vicario, twice a finalist, in straight sets in the last four. Novotna's grass-court game is the perfect antidote to Hingis's baseline style, which may be compromised by the uneven bounce on a rutted Centre Court.

Nevertheless, the four-year-old ghost refuses to submit. Novotna, the No 3 seed, said: "I have talked about it a lot. In 1993, I had to prove to myself and everybody else that I was a good player. I wanted it too much and I was never able to play my best tennis. Over the years, my outlook has changed. Tennis is not everything, there is a life outside."

She was alluding to the illness of her father, who recently relapsed into a serious illness that he suffered from two years ago. Knowing that her parents are to watch the match on television, in the

Czech Republic, will test Novotna's assertion that she has learnt to relax. She pulled out of the women's doubles tournament yesterday, citing a strain in her upper thigh that is not expected to trouble her today.

By contrast to Hingis, who has yet to play a third set here, Novotna has twice been taken the distance—by Elena Likhovtseva and Mary Joe Fernandez. Her sharing of the Eastbourne title with Sánchez Vicario means that she is unbeaten in three weeks of grass-court tennis. Her confidence could hardly be higher.

It will need to be against Hingis, the world No 1 and similarly seeded here. Unlike Novotna, the teenager, who is still only 16, already holds a grand-slam title, having triumphed in the Australian Open in January.

She has lost just once this year, to Iva Majoli, of Croatia, in the final of the French Open, and she holds a 3-2 advantage in previous matches with Novotna, winning most recently in March at the Lipton championships in Florida.

Hingis will start the final today as favourite, although Navratilova, the winner of nine Wimbledon singles titles, will be shocked to learn of her disdain for the place—particularly Centre Court, which Navratilova made her second home.

"I hate this court," Hingis said. "I hate grass because you have to think differently on the surface. You have to put the first serve in more often." Of Navratilova's outstanding record here, Hingis said: "She just loved the Wimbledon tournament. Hopefully I, too, will love it one day."

Hingis has yet to face a seeded player on her way to the final and her inexperience and dislike of grass may tug at her confidence. If Novotna can exploit the lack of pace on Hingis's second service, the Centre Court crowd may join her in this time shedding tears of joy.



COVERAGE: Television: Today: BBC1: Grandstand, from 1.00pm. BBC2: Live, from 1.20pm (with cricket). Tomorrow: BBC1: Live, from 1.30pm. BBC2: Sunday Grandstand, from 6.00pm. Radio: BBC Radio 5 Live: Today: Live, from 1.00pm (with rugby). Tomorrow: Live, from 1.00pm (with cycling, cricket, golf). WEATHER: Mostly dry and sunny.



Novotna will have the crowd's support today and her grass-court game is the perfect foil for Hingis's baseline style

Big girls reward lonely vigil

Ah, the law of diminishing returns. I knew it would come in handy one day. Out on No 18 Court, where that fascinating prospect of a mixed doubles third-round match (Sapsford and Siddle) v Broad and de Swardt was raised off twice yesterday afternoon, the initially small crowd of 32 returned in smaller and smaller (diminishing) numbers until there was actually nobody at all. First there were 32, then 11, and then just one, sitting on a damp, tip-up seat with my rain-hood on, pretending to enjoy a choc ice and attempting to hail passers-by ("Come on in, you'll love it!") with very little hope of success.

The weather was at its most deeply irritating yesterday. Play in this match started... and then it stopped, with only two points played. Covers went on, then came off again, then went on again with only a knock-up intervening. Why do they still bother with a knock-up when clouds are patiently gathering overhead? Why don't they say "Let's skip this bit and press on?" I will never understand people who don't cut corners in an emergency.

But then, that's what it's like here generally. The most difficult thing about the waiting at Wimbledon is that although the covers go on with commendable lightning speed, it takes hours to reverse the process. They whip away the chairs and net like demons, but replace them in a casual, gone-fishing, where's-the-fire kind of way, as if the word "urgency" had never been invented.

Patience is a virtue, of course, but only people who have spent prolonged periods in laid-back countries such as Fiji or Samoa can cope with this strange and wilful slow-coaching. For people like myself, who prefer to get a move on, the result of all this grinded teeth is molars ground to a fine dust.

Since, for a considerable period, the two points on Neil Broad's service looked to be the only ones on offer in this match, I pondered then long and hard and through several cups of tea. What would happen after 15-all? Gosh, it could go to 30-15, but that would be to overlook the even more thrilling possibility of 15-30. Worth hanging about then. Moreover, was it possible to extrapolate an entire match from just two points, the way zoologists reconstruct dinosaurs from a single tooth? While I was considering this option, the linesmen returned to the court for the second time, to the small-terrors of snafus. It's odd how just one person clapping always sounds sarcastic, no matter how enthusiastic she really is.

Once they got going, these four proceeded predictably. Broad and de Swardt broke Shirli-Ann Siddle's service in the first set 7-5; in the second set, they finished them off 6-3. Some rather good rallying displays were appreciated by the slowly swelling crowd—it's those volleying bits that always give the crowds a laugh, isn't it?—and, just to add a note of controversy, Neil ("British") Broad contested a line-call with "Ya hiff ta

LYNNE TRUSS



Kicking & Screaming

be kiddink me!", showing off his adoptive accent to full effect.

Mixed doubles, it has to be said, is the final you watch on the telly when the big, heavy singles stuff is all done. It's synonymous with lengthening shadows and a big silly smile on your face. If memory serves, you usually get a ladies champion partnering some biddable muscular unseeded chap, together beating a couple of unknowns, with a good time had by all. By that stage in the tournament, mixed doubles is a way of returning tennis to the status of fun.

Third-round stuff is considerably more serious and dampening to the spirits, but it was good to see the big girls (who simply don't come much bigger) holding their own, since my only experience as a participant in mixed doubles (at age 15) was being told to stand at the net without

moving, while the chap dashed madly back, forth and sideways, in a must-de-everything sort of way. As I remember it, my only function in our matches was to mouth the word "Sorry" from time to time, when the chap body-surfed heroically across my side of the court, or slid past me on his burn into the net.

I should have taken some knitting along really, but unfortunately I didn't have the strength of character for even a silent protest. But I have just remembered that his name was Gerald, which is interesting because I haven't thought about him in years.

I remember how I would occasionally whisper "Mine!" when a shot came directly at my racket, and then regret it when my instinctive reach resulted in a clash of graphite and a prolonged sulk from the chap. Why I didn't hit the chap with the racket is something I ponder to this very day.

Nothing of this sort happens at this Wimbledon level, of course, but you still watch the partners to make sure there's no sexual harassment, or sulking, or if you want something done properly do-it-yourself tendencies on display. A couple of sharp words were exchanged between Sapsford and Siddle in the first set and it wasn't nice at all, but between Broad and de Swardt there seemed to be considerable harmony. When someone of de Swardt's size and demeanour says "Mine!" I think the correct reply is "Absolutely". No other response would really suffice.

Sampras takes on the world single-handed

Simon Barnes examines the qualities of a champion who needs no partner

It may have escaped your attention, but this has been a distinctly rum Wimbledon. There has been a lot to distract one's attention from the main plot, after all, what with the Brave Brits of various origins, the march past of pouting 16-year-old girls and, of course, the rain.

But if we can get down to reality, or at least tennis, we found ourselves with the most extraordinary semi-final programme in the men's event—one triple champion and three unseeded players.

There were some observers expressing the view before play started yesterday that the chances of Pete Sampras losing another set in the championship were negligible. Pity the first of the unseeds to stand in his way—the Australian, Todd Woodbridge.

It is hard to think of Woodbridge as a distinct entity, at least in tennis terms. He is not Woodbridge, he is 50 per cent of the Woodies. Not a cutesy folk group, but the Australian doubles partnership, unstoppable champions in this unregarded, unreported but well-rewarded version of the game.

The other half of the Woodies is Mark Woodford. It comes as a surprise to find that they are not, after all, joined at the hip. Each one is capable of winning a tennis match all by himself.

Woody M. reached the round of 16, where he took a set off Michael Stich, who went on to become one of the unseeded semi-finalists. Woody T did still better, reaching the semi-finals, where he had the ill-luck to meet Sampras. Sampras won 6-2, 6-1, 7-6 and needed no luck whatsoever.

The Woodies won 12 doubles titles last year. They won the Olympic competition, too, beating the pairing of Broad and a chap called Henman. They have won four consecutive Wimbledon titles. They would stand a chance of being called the best doubles team since the 1930s, were it not for John McEnroe and Peter Fleming, who in 1979 won 15.

It was always one of the many odd and more or less paradoxically endearing things about McEnroe that he liked to play doubles. It was not as if he needed the money, still less the practice. What he did need was a friend on the tennis court.

Few of the very big names in men's tennis play doubles. Instead, they take the hard and lonely road. For them, tennis is seldom fun, always a fierce and terrible drama. But that is true for spectators, too.

Doubles is the definitive form of the game. It is the form most people play—more rallies, less fetching—and, in terms of shots and rallies and see-sawing advantage, it is a better game for spectators.

Singles is not such good entertainment as doubles, in terms of ball-biffing, but it is deep and rich drama, one of the profoundest and cruellest examinations of character that exists in sport.

Most of the people in the top 20 of tennis are extremely good and, in the main, it is not their forehands and the backhands that separate the champions from the rest. It is their ability to walk the hard and lonely road that they have chosen.

There are some lonely people who yearn for approval, for love, from any source. And on court in singles tennis, the nearest person to you, and by far the most intimate, is your opponent. The match yesterday gave us the perfect example. Sampras was able to turn Woodbridge into his partner, his stooge, his servant.

Sampras was like the centaurion who said "go" and he goes, "come" and he comes. It is a strange process. Woodbridge came in with a plan and with a champion's determination, for champion he is, but he found himself slowly nudged and cajoled and manoeuvred into doing the bidding of the man who is a champion of the lonely road, the man who has never sought love on a tennis court.

Belonging to a team. To some people, this is the greatest, the most profound of all joys. Shared aims, shared joys, even shared disappointments. To be the one that clings to the catch or kicks the ball off the line is to bring upon yourself a tidal wave of warmth, of love.

Doubles in tennis is something of the same thing, you and me against the world, but yesterday it was the world against Woody and, not surprisingly, Woody came second.

Sampras has known the same feeling, that the world was on one side and just little him on the other. That was after he won his first grand-slam event and came close to breaking under the weight of it all. But he did not. He came out stronger, harder and perhaps lonelier.

Doubles is a better game. At least, better for ordinary people. Singles is too hard, too tough, too downright brutal. It is only rarely suitable for perfectly extraordinary people. People such as Sampras have a high and lonely destiny.

THE FITNESS FRAGRANCE BY RALPH LAUREN



Broad casts daylight on British prospects

By NICK SZCZEPANIK

HENMAN and Rusedski may be out of Wimbledon, but they were not the last British survivors. In addition to Hannah Collin, who reached the quarter-finals of the girls' singles before being eliminated yesterday by the No 6 seed, Aubrie Rippner, a continuing British presence was guaranteed when Danny Sapsford and Shirli-Ann Siddle faced Neil Broad and his partner, Marianna de Swardt, of South Africa, in the third round of the mixed doubles. It was Broad who made it to the last-eight stage.

The women's doubles is the part of the tournament that has run most truly to form, or in closest accordance with the seedings. The six top-seeded pairs advanced to the quarter-finals, but the withdrawal of Jana Novotna yesterday gave Sabine Appelmans and Miriam Oremans, seeded No 12, a semi-final place.

There they will meet the

No 1 seeds, Gigi Fernandez and Natasha Zvereva, Olympic gold medal-winners and reigning US and French Open champions, who had a close match with Mary Joe Fernandez and Lisa Raymond, the No 5 seeds, losing the first set with a double fault on the Zvereva service. The favourites asserted themselves in the second and third sets, winning 5-7, 6-4, 6-4.

The pairing that has captured the imagination of the public is that of Martina Hingis and Arantxa Sánchez Vicario. Their appearances have guaranteed packed houses on the outside courts. Alas, no longer. They found the going hard against Nicole Pietrangeli and Manon Bollegraf, the No 6 seeds, losing 6-4, 5-7, 6-2. Hingis's schedule of three doubles matches yesterday will have delighted Jana Novotna as well as those wanting a glimpse of the world singles No 1.

Men's singles		N J ARENDT (US) and M M BOLLEGAFF (AUS) vs M HINGIS (SLO) and A SANCHEZ VICARIO (ESP) 6-4, 7-6, 6-3	
Winner: £415,000	Runner-up: £207,500	Holder: R Krajnc (SLO)	
Semi-final		P SAMPRAS (US) vs T A WOODBRIDGE (AUS) 6-2, 6-1, 7-6	
C Pietrangeli (ITA) vs M Stich (GER) 6-7, 6-2, 6-2			
Men's doubles			
Winner: £170,030	Runner-up: £85,015	Holder: A Wood (GBR) and M Wood (AUS)	
Semi-final		N BROAD (GBR) and M DE SWARDT (RSA) vs D E SARDT (RSA) and S A SIDDLE (GBR) 7-5, 6-3	
G COLLIN (GBR) and L A DRYDENPORT (AUS) vs T A WOODBRIDGE (AUS) and L M MOHR (US) 4-6, 7-6, 6-4			
SECOND ROUND: Mixed doubles			
BOLLEGAFF (AUS) vs M R FAY (GBR) and M BOLLEGAFF (AUS) vs M R FAY (GBR) 6-3, 6-3			
C J WOOD (GBR) vs J L de JAGER (RSA) and M HINGIS (SLO) vs A SANCHEZ VICARIO (ESP) 6-4, 6-4			
M RAYMOND (US) vs G C DOWNES (GBR) and C H RAE (GBR) vs J L de JAGER (RSA) 6-4, 6-4			
Men's over-35 doubles			
Winner: £14,000	Runner-up: £7,000	Holder: W J Fisk (GBR) and T VIKER (GBR)	
First round (best of three)		P B McENROE (AUS) and P F McENROE (AUS) vs G BOLT (AUS) and T VIKER (GBR) 6-3, 6-3	
A A HINGIS (SLO) and A SANCHEZ VICARIO (ESP) vs A A HINGIS (SLO) and A SANCHEZ VICARIO (ESP) 6-3, 6-3			
Women's singles			
Winner: £210,000	Runner-up: £105,000	Holder: J Durré (GBR) and A E Smith (US)	
Semi-final		J DURRE (GBR) vs J L LLOYD (GBR) 6-3, 6-3	
A E SMITH (US) vs J L LLOYD (GBR) 6-3, 6-3			
Women's over-35 doubles			
Winner: £10,000	Runner-up: £5,000	Holder: J Durré (GBR) and A E Smith (US)	
First round (best of three)		P B McENROE (AUS) and P F McENROE (AUS) vs G BOLT (AUS) and T VIKER (GBR) 6-3, 6-3	
A A HINGIS (SLO) and A SANCHEZ VICARIO (ESP) vs A A HINGIS (SLO) and A SANCHEZ VICARIO (ESP) 6-3, 6-3			
Boys' singles			
Holder: V Vokich (GBR)			
Quarter-final		D BAKER (GBR) vs J LLOYD (GBR) 6-3, 6-3	
J LLOYD (GBR) vs J LLOYD (GBR) 6-3, 6-3			
Girls' singles			
Holder: A Mazzocco (ITA)			
Quarter-final		A MAZZOCCO (ITA) vs J LLOYD (GBR) 6-3, 6-3	
J LLOYD (GBR) vs J LLOYD (GBR) 6-3, 6-3			

FOOTBALL: ENGLAND MIDFIELD PLAYER SIGNS THREE-YEAR DEAL WITH SCOTTISH CHAMPIONS

Gascoigne decides future lies with Rangers

By RUSSELL KEMPSON

PAUL GASCOIGNE, the England midfielder, yesterday signed a new three-year contract with Rangers, keeping him at the club until June 2000 and ending speculation that he was considering leaving the Bell's Scottish League champions.

After "brief and amicable" discussions with David Murray, the Rangers chairman, Gascoigne agreed to stay at Ibrox, where he moved to from Lazio for £4.3 million two

years ago. Murray has spent heavily during the summer as Rangers attempt to create a Scottish record of winning ten successive league titles. "Paul has been a tremendous servant," Murray said. "When he is playing the way he can, there is no criticism. The problems are when he is not playing."

In a statement, Gascoigne, 30, said: "I'm enjoying being part of Rangers and want to be part of the new team, combining the strengths of the nine-in-a-row squad with the

fantastic new talent that has joined the club over the close season."

Arène Wenger, the Arsenal manager, yesterday defended his policy of signing foreign players. Of the ten players Wenger has brought to Highbury since he joined the club nine months ago, only one—Matthew Upson, from Luton Town—is English. "You have to buy outside this country because of the prices and availability," Wenger said. "For the price of one English player, you can

probably buy three or four from abroad. The other managers are doing the same."

Wenger, who has spent more than £20 million strengthening his squad and recouped only £8 million in sales, also spoke about the club's poor disciplinary record of 83 bookings and five dismissals last season—the worst in the FA Carling Premiership. "I really don't know the reason," Wenger said, "but I don't think we have killed anybody. I will go to the FA,

argue our case and listen to what they have to say. Perhaps it is an area in which we have to improve; maybe we'll have to channel our aggression in a different way."

Roy Evans, the Liverpool manager, has played down reports that the signing of Paul Ince, the England and Internazionale midfielder player, has been completed. "There's still a lot of work to be done," Evans said. "We're inching forward all the time and trying to bring it to a conclusion."

GOLF

Westwood fortifies challenge by new order

FROM JOHN HOPKINS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT IN DUBLIN

THE young European players for whom there have been so many calls as their seniors move towards the Ryder Cup age seem to be arriving. Lee Westwood, 24, has widened his lead at the halfway stage of the Murphy's Irish Open and though the field is studded with every gilded veteran of golf on this Continent, it is two youngsters who are sharing second place.

Michael Jonzon, 25, from Sweden, broke Westwood's course record of 65 at Druids Glen, which had lasted all of 24 hours. A 64, including one bogey and a dazzling run of five successive birdies, was good scoring on a difficult day. It took Jonzon, the Portuguese Open champion, to six under-par and within two strokes of Westwood.

SCORES

Great Britain and Ireland Official Status

LEADERS AFTER TWO ROUNDS: Lee Westwood 65, Michael Jonzon 66, 70, 72, 74, 76, 78, 80, 82, 84, 86, 88, 90, 92, 94, 96, 98, 100, 102, 104, 106, 108, 110, 112, 114, 116, 118, 120, 122, 124, 126, 128, 130, 132, 134, 136, 138, 140, 142, 144, 146, 148, 150, 152, 154, 156, 158, 160, 162, 164, 166, 168, 170, 172, 174, 176, 178, 180, 182, 184, 186, 188, 190, 192, 194, 196, 198, 200, 202, 204, 206, 208, 210, 212, 214, 216, 218, 220, 222, 224, 226, 228, 230, 232, 234, 236, 238, 240, 242, 244, 246, 248, 250, 252, 254, 256, 258, 260, 262, 264, 266, 268, 270, 272, 274, 276, 278, 280, 282, 284, 286, 288, 290, 292, 294, 296, 298, 300, 302, 304, 306, 308, 310, 312, 314, 316, 318, 320, 322, 324, 326, 328, 330, 332, 334, 336, 338, 340, 342, 344, 346, 348, 350, 352, 354, 356, 358, 360, 362, 364, 366, 368, 370, 372, 374, 376, 378, 380, 382, 384, 386, 388, 390, 392, 394, 396, 398, 400, 402, 404, 406, 408, 410, 412, 414, 416, 418, 420, 422, 424, 426, 428, 430, 432, 434, 436, 438, 440, 442, 444, 446, 448, 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3864, 3866, 3868, 3870, 3872, 3874, 3876, 3878, 3880, 3882, 3884, 3886, 3888, 3890, 3892, 3894, 3896, 3898, 3900, 3902, 3904, 3906, 3908, 3910, 3912, 3914, 3916, 3918, 3920, 3922, 3924, 3926, 3928, 3930, 3932, 3934, 3936, 3938, 3940, 3942, 3944, 3946, 3948, 3950, 3952, 3954, 3956, 3958, 3960, 3962, 3964, 3966, 3968, 3970, 3972, 3974, 3976, 3978, 3980, 3982, 3984, 3986, 3988, 3990, 3992, 3994, 3996, 3998, 4000, 4002, 4004, 4006, 4008, 4010, 4012, 4014, 4016, 4018, 4020, 4022, 4024, 4026, 4028, 4030, 4032, 4034, 4036, 4038, 4040, 4042, 4044, 4046, 4048, 4050, 4052, 4054, 4056, 4058, 4060, 4062, 4064, 4066, 4068, 4070, 4072, 4074, 4076, 4078, 4080, 4082, 4084, 4086, 4088, 4090, 4092, 4094, 4096, 4098, 4100, 4102, 4104, 4106, 4108, 4110, 4112, 4114, 4116, 4118, 4120, 4122, 4124, 4126, 4128, 4130, 4132, 4134, 4136, 4138, 4140, 4142, 4144, 4146, 4148, 4150, 4152, 4154, 4156, 4158, 4160, 4162, 4164, 4166, 4168, 4170, 4172, 4



CYCLING 41

Flying start the key to success for Boardman

SPORT

SATURDAY JULY 5 1997

RUGBY UNION 41

Lions given extra incentive by prospect of rare clean sweep



England's tormentor returns to seize initiative in third Test



Warne leads the Australian celebrations after Crawley, caught behind by Healy, becomes the fourth of his five victims at Old Trafford yesterday. Photograph: Dan Chung

Warne casts his spell again

By Alan Lee
CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

OLD TRAFFORD (second day of five): England, with two first-innings wickets in hand, are 74 runs behind Australia

PERHAPS it was the place that inspired him, a pilgrimage to his Mecca, or perhaps it was the fact that the world and his wife had become experts in physical ailments and psychology and pronounced that his career was on the critical list. Something got him going and Shane Warne, when roused, remains a formidable opponent.

He has always possessed that precious ability to transform a game with baffling speed and sleight of hand and he did so yesterday, casting his mesmeric spell at the very time when Australia were in danger of declining towards a potentially decisive second defeat.

At 74 for one, in reply to an evidently inadequate 235, Eng-

land were contemplating a position of command by the second evening of the third Cornhill Test. Then Warne made a nonsense of strategy and speculation with a spell as devastating as any in an Ashes cuttings book that dates back four years to his unforgettable introductory ball on this same ground.

Seven England wickets went down for 49 runs and Warne's contribution was to take five of them for 19, his first five-wicket return for 16 Tests spanning 19 months. He was helped by a pitch offering turn, sometimes lavish when the ball pitched in the footmarks outside leg stump, but the greatest assistance came from compliant batting.

Whatever theories England have produced to counter the danger of Warne — and they have been hours and weeks in the making — were either forgotten or ineffective. Even bowling of this soaring quality should not paralyse the minds and movements of Test-match

players, but successive batsmen departed to strokes of sacrificial ineptitude. By the time that Mark Ealham and Andy Caddick came together in a defiant ninth-wicket stand that raised 38, Australia were strutting their stuff for the first time on tour. They will not easily be subdued again.

Yet the first half of this riveting if run-starved day had belonged almost exclusively to England. First, they had redeemed the sins of Thursday evening, when they bowled wastefully short, by taking the remaining three Australia wickets for 11 runs.

Steve Waugh had predicted that his eighth-wicket stand with Paul Reiffel could decide the match and he may be right, but England, back on their game, were doubtless content. Darren Gough rediscovered his Yorker to flatten Reiffel's off stump, then bowled Waugh off an inside edge with another inswinger of full length.

Waugh's four-hour hundred, ranked even by his own severe self-analysis as his best in Test cricket, exhibited all the virtues of mental resilience and technical merit that England could not match. He also stood in supreme isolation above his own players.

Once Gillespie had been caught behind off Headley, who had dropped a return catch the previous ball, England's initial assignment was to reach lunch unscathed. They failed. Atherton flapping at a pull against McGrath to give Healy a leg-side catch, but by the interval, Mark Butcher and Alec Stewart were proceeding serenely.

There had been only two moments of alarm. One came when Stewart misjudged a second run to square leg so badly that he almost ran out his brother-in-law, and the other arose when Warne's first ball failed only narrowly to emulate the 1993 vintage by spinning viciously out of the rough. Butcher, however, sur-

vived this and all else the Australians could bowl at him with impressive calm. He left the ball skilfully and selectively and, as a pitch now dried and paled by the sunshine offered ever less to the seam bowlers, England advanced with assurance. What happened next would have begged belief had we all not seen Warne do similar things several times over.

Stewart was first to depart, and if his feet were crease-bound and his stroke diffident, it was still a fine piece of bowling. Warne, pitching around leg stump, obtained such bounce and turn that it took an outside edge at the top of the bat and was expertly caught by Taylor at slip.

Butcher will be distressed by his dismissal, coming after so much solid graft and only one ball after completing his second successive Test fifty. Bevan, as is his occasional wont, served up a leg-side full toss. It should have gone for four, but Butcher missed it.

overbalanced and was smartly stumped.

Hussain twice lapped Warne fine for four and the pressure eased, but England could not afford another loss before tea and when Thorpe used his favoured, full-blooded sweep against Warne and was caught at slip off inside edge and pad, the balance had shifted dramatically inside 40 minutes.

The worst was yet to come, for it was clear that the tea interval had done nothing to calm England's rising sense of paranoia, a familiar affliction when Warne is in such a mood. Hussain and Crawley offered time, hypnotised pros, sacrificial to Warne's leg break. So hard were they trying to open their shoulders, the latest technical play impressed upon the England batsmen, that they ended up looking as inept as schoolboys playing French cricket.

Croft, caught in the slipstream of the devastation, heaved McGrath flat-footedly to extra cover and Warne, animated to the point of intimidation, finally won a leg-before decision as Gough propped forward.

Ealham, whose cricket is nothing if not sensible, showed with Caddick that this pitch is far from unplayable. It is, however, turning ever more, and even if England creep close on first innings, Warne awaits them in the second. His blood is up, his googly has begun to work, if he can operate again with men round the bat, Australia should level the series by Monday, at the latest.

Essex humbled, page 41

SCOREBOARD FROM OLD TRAFFORD

Australia won 1997		England 1st Innings	
*M A Taylor c Thorpe b Headley 40 (120min 57 balls 1 hour)		*M A Taylor c Thorpe b Headley 40 (120min 57 balls 1 hour)	
M T G Elliott c Stewart b Headley 2 (20min 13 balls 1 hour)		M T G Elliott c Stewart b Headley 2 (20min 13 balls 1 hour)	
G S Bennett b Gough 8 (10min 13 balls 1 hour)		G S Bennett b Gough 8 (10min 13 balls 1 hour)	
M E Waugh c Stewart b Ealham 108 (120min 175 balls 1 hour)		M E Waugh c Stewart b Ealham 108 (120min 175 balls 1 hour)	
B R Waugh b Gough 102 (120min 175 balls 1 hour)		B R Waugh b Gough 102 (120min 175 balls 1 hour)	
M G Bevan c Stewart b Headley 7 (20min 13 balls 1 hour)		M G Bevan c Stewart b Headley 7 (20min 13 balls 1 hour)	
N A Healy c Stewart b Caddick 9 (120min 175 balls 1 hour)		N A Healy c Stewart b Caddick 9 (120min 175 balls 1 hour)	
S K Warne c Stewart b Ealham 3 (10min 13 balls 1 hour)		S K Warne c Stewart b Ealham 3 (10min 13 balls 1 hour)	
P R Reiffel b Gough 31 (120min 175 balls 1 hour)		P R Reiffel b Gough 31 (120min 175 balls 1 hour)	
J N Gillespie c Stewart b Headley 0 (10min 13 balls 1 hour)		J N Gillespie c Stewart b Headley 0 (10min 13 balls 1 hour)	
G D McGrath not out (40min 26 balls)		G D McGrath not out (40min 26 balls)	
Extras 8 (40min 26 balls)		Extras 8 (40min 26 balls)	
Total (77.3 overs, 324mins) 235		Total (77.3 overs, 324mins) 235	
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-0 (20min 13 balls 1 hour) 2-0 (20min 13 balls 1 hour) 3-0 (20min 13 balls 1 hour) 4-0 (20min 13 balls 1 hour) 5-0 (20min 13 balls 1 hour) 6-0 (20min 13 balls 1 hour) 7-0 (20min 13 balls 1 hour) 8-0 (20min 13 balls 1 hour) 9-0 (20min 13 balls 1 hour)		FALL OF WICKETS: 1-0 (20min 13 balls 1 hour) 2-0 (20min 13 balls 1 hour) 3-0 (20min 13 balls 1 hour) 4-0 (20min 13 balls 1 hour) 5-0 (20min 13 balls 1 hour) 6-0 (20min 13 balls 1 hour) 7-0 (20min 13 balls 1 hour) 8-0 (20min 13 balls 1 hour) 9-0 (20min 13 balls 1 hour)	
BOWLING: Gough 21-7-50-3 (1st 37.4 overs 8-5-10-1 2nd 37.4-24-4-1 3rd 37.4-24-4-1 4th 37.4-24-4-1 5th 37.4-24-4-1 6th 37.4-24-4-1 7th 37.4-24-4-1 8th 37.4-24-4-1 9th 37.4-24-4-1)		BOWLING: Gough 21-7-50-3 (1st 37.4 overs 8-5-10-1 2nd 37.4-24-4-1 3rd 37.4-24-4-1 4th 37.4-24-4-1 5th 37.4-24-4-1 6th 37.4-24-4-1 7th 37.4-24-4-1 8th 37.4-24-4-1 9th 37.4-24-4-1)	
Caddick 14-2-52-1 (1st 11.1 overs 5-1-13-0 2nd 11.1-5-13-0 3rd 11.1-5-13-0 4th 11.1-5-13-0 5th 11.1-5-13-0 6th 11.1-5-13-0 7th 11.1-5-13-0 8th 11.1-5-13-0 9th 11.1-5-13-0)		Caddick 14-2-52-1 (1st 11.1 overs 5-1-13-0 2nd 11.1-5-13-0 3rd 11.1-5-13-0 4th 11.1-5-13-0 5th 11.1-5-13-0 6th 11.1-5-13-0 7th 11.1-5-13-0 8th 11.1-5-13-0 9th 11.1-5-13-0)	
Ealham 11-2-34-2 (1st 11.1 overs 5-1-13-0 2nd 11.1-5-13-0 3rd 11.1-5-13-0 4th 11.1-5-13-0 5th 11.1-5-13-0 6th 11.1-5-13-0 7th 11.1-5-13-0 8th 11.1-5-13-0 9th 11.1-5-13-0)		Ealham 11-2-34-2 (1st 11.1 overs 5-1-13-0 2nd 11.1-5-13-0 3rd 11.1-5-13-0 4th 11.1-5-13-0 5th 11.1-5-13-0 6th 11.1-5-13-0 7th 11.1-5-13-0 8th 11.1-5-13-0 9th 11.1-5-13-0)	
Cork 4-0-13-0 (1st 11.1 overs 5-1-13-0 2nd 11.1-5-13-0 3rd 11.1-5-13-0 4th 11.1-5-13-0 5th 11.1-5-13-0 6th 11.1-5-13-0 7th 11.1-5-13-0 8th 11.1-5-13-0 9th 11.1-5-13-0)		Cork 4-0-13-0 (1st 11.1 overs 5-1-13-0 2nd 11.1-5-13-0 3rd 11.1-5-13-0 4th 11.1-5-13-0 5th 11.1-5-13-0 6th 11.1-5-13-0 7th 11.1-5-13-0 8th 11.1-5-13-0 9th 11.1-5-13-0)	
ENGLAND: 1st Innings		ENGLAND: 1st Innings	
M A Butcher at Healy b Bevan 51 (120min 175 balls 1 hour)		M A Butcher at Healy b Bevan 51 (120min 175 balls 1 hour)	
*M A Atherton c Healy b McGrath 5 (120min 175 balls 1 hour)		*M A Atherton c Healy b McGrath 5 (120min 175 balls 1 hour)	
Extras 10 (120min 175 balls 1 hour)		Extras 10 (120min 175 balls 1 hour)	
Total (18.6 overs, 81 overs, 324mins) 30		Total (18.6 overs, 81 overs, 324mins) 30	
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-0 (11.1min 7 balls 2 hours) 2-0 (11.1min 7 balls 2 hours) 3-0 (11.1min 7 balls 2 hours) 4-0 (11.1min 7 balls 2 hours) 5-0 (11.1min 7 balls 2 hours) 6-0 (11.1min 7 balls 2 hours) 7-0 (11.1min 7 balls 2 hours) 8-0 (11.1min 7 balls 2 hours) 9-0 (11.1min 7 balls 2 hours)		FALL OF WICKETS: 1-0 (11.1min 7 balls 2 hours) 2-0 (11.1min 7 balls 2 hours) 3-0 (11.1min 7 balls 2 hours) 4-0 (11.1min 7 balls 2 hours) 5-0 (11.1min 7 balls 2 hours) 6-0 (11.1min 7 balls 2 hours) 7-0 (11.1min 7 balls 2 hours) 8-0 (11.1min 7 balls 2 hours) 9-0 (11.1min 7 balls 2 hours)	
BOWLING: McGrath 22-8-39-2 (1st 11.1min 7 balls 2 hours) 2nd 11.1-5-13-0 3rd 11.1-5-13-0 4th 11.1-5-13-0 5th 11.1-5-13-0 6th 11.1-5-13-0 7th 11.1-5-13-0 8th 11.1-5-13-0 9th 11.1-5-13-0)		BOWLING: McGrath 22-8-39-2 (1st 11.1min 7 balls 2 hours) 2nd 11.1-5-13-0 3rd 11.1-5-13-0 4th 11.1-5-13-0 5th 11.1-5-13-0 6th 11.1-5-13-0 7th 11.1-5-13-0 8th 11.1-5-13-0 9th 11.1-5-13-0)	
Reiffel 9-2-14-0 (1st 11.1min 7 balls 2 hours) 2nd 11.1-5-13-0 3rd 11.1-5-13-0 4th 11.1-5-13-0 5th 11.1-5-13-0 6th 11.1-5-13-0 7th 11.1-5-13-0 8th 11.1-5-13-0 9th 11.1-5-13-0)		Reiffel 9-2-14-0 (1st 11.1min 7 balls 2 hours) 2nd 11.1-5-13-0 3rd 11.1-5-13-0 4th 11.1-5-13-0 5th 11.1-5-13-0 6th 11.1-5-13-0 7th 11.1-5-13-0 8th 11.1-5-13-0 9th 11.1-5-13-0)	
Warne 28-12-48-5 (1st 11.1min 7 balls 2 hours) 2nd 11.1-5-13-0 3rd 11.1-5-13-0 4th 11.1-5-13-0 5th 11.1-5-13-0 6th 11.1-5-13-0 7th 11.1-5-13-0 8th 11.1-5-13-0 9th 11.1-5-13-0)		Warne 28-12-48-5 (1st 11.1min 7 balls 2 hours) 2nd 11.1-5-13-0 3rd 11.1-5-13-0 4th 11.1-5-13-0 5th 11.1-5-13-0 6th 11.1-5-13-0 7th 11.1-5-13-0 8th 11.1-5-13-0 9th 11.1-5-13-0)	
10-1-27-0 4-2-12-0 Bevan 8-3-14-1 (1st 11.1min 7 balls 2 hours) 2nd 11.1-5-13-0 3rd 11.1-5-13-0 4th 11.1-5-13-0 5th 11.1-5-13-0 6th 11.1-5-13-0 7th 11.1-5-13-0 8th 11.1-5-13-0 9th 11.1-5-13-0)		10-1-27-0 4-2-12-0 Bevan 8-3-14-1 (1st 11.1min 7 balls 2 hours) 2nd 11.1-5-13-0 3rd 11.1-5-13-0 4th 11.1-5-13-0 5th 11.1-5-13-0 6th 11.1-5-13-0 7th 11.1-5-13-0 8th 11.1-5-13-0 9th 11.1-5-13-0)	
SCORING NOTES: Second day: Lunch 37.1 (18 overs 70min) Butcher 17, Stewart 13, Thorpe 10, 148 overs 180min Hussain 13, Crawley 4, Umpires G Shepp and S Venkataraghavan (India). Third umpire: J H Hampshire. Match referee: R S Madugala (Sri Lanka).		SCORING NOTES: Second day: Lunch 37.1 (18 overs 70min) Butcher 17, Stewart 13, Thorpe 10, 148 overs 180min Hussain 13, Crawley 4, Umpires G Shepp and S Venkataraghavan (India). Third umpire: J H Hampshire. Match referee: R S Madugala (Sri Lanka).	
SERIES DETAILS: First (Edgbaston) England won by nine wickets. Second (Lord's) Match drawn. To come: Fourth (Headingley) July 24-28. Fifth (Trent Bridge) August 7-11. Sixth (The Oval) August 21-25.		SERIES DETAILS: First (Edgbaston) England won by nine wickets. Second (Lord's) Match drawn. To come: Fourth (Headingley) July 24-28. Fifth (Trent Bridge) August 7-11. Sixth (The Oval) August 21-25.	
CI Compiled by Giff Ford		CI Compiled by Giff Ford	

Bobby from Brisbane sees Ashes set ablaze

An hour after lunch at Old Trafford yesterday, a special atmosphere had built up in the ground, though it was one that has been seen in several British sporting arenas this summer. The Union Flag was being waved, so too the flag of St George, the jazz bands played with extra verve and people — English people — were singing, in a manner Roger Knight would approve of, about the Ashes "coming home". Even the sun was out, for goodness sake.

The passage of play since the interval had been tense, a grim tussle for supremacy that England appeared, finally, to have won. Butcher and Stewart were breaking free, Stewart off-drove Gillespie for four. Butcher fiercely pulled him through mid-wicket.

There was a feeling that — as

Frederick Spofforth, the great Australia bowler, declared to his teammates, before they denied England the 85 runs that they needed for victory in the match that gave birth to the Ashes in 1882 — "this thing can be done". This time, England really could regain the urn.

The demise of Henman at Wimbledon was just a blip on Britain's sporting graphs, the way Alan Crompton, the Australia tour manager, had talked on the radio the previous evening about the pitch "crumbling" mere propaganda. Warne's first ball may have produced an uncomfortable echo of the past, but when all is said and done, it was pitched unthreateningly short.

Yet the sun's emergence was not the cue for English euphoria but Australian assertion. The warmth, and a zephyr that dried and hard-

ened the pitch, was working its magic for Warne — Michael Atherton said before the match that the leg spinner would be hoping for "five days of sun" — and he promptly produced a shorter to remove Stewart. Butcher and Thorpe quickly followed and, when the players came in at tea, Crawley and Hussain looked pensive under their helmets and the Australians returned to concerted applause from their colleagues.

A few feet away in the pavilion

bar, Australia supporters, who had flown halfway round the world to watch their team, were cock-a-hoop. "This is the first sunshine we've had since we got here five weeks ago and only the second day without rain," said Bobby, a Queenslander with two pints in his hand. "This is some place. In Brisbane, you get up and you know there will be blue skies outside."

But he had never had any doubt about Warne. "He was always going to come good and today is the day. That said, some of the English shots were crud. This day will be the turning point of the tour."

One of Bobby's friends from home refused to come on the trip because he felt it would be boring to watch England being trounced again and did not rate some of the Australian players either. "He thought he'd

rather save his money." Bobby and the mate that he brought with him instead paid for their trip with a big win at a casino, though they planned to come anyway. When they have not been watching the cricket or the rain, they have been drinking beer and chasing girls. "We've not had much luck in that area, unfortunately." Maybe the sunshine will help in that direction, too.

After tea, English wickets continued to go down, "like a pack of cards" in the words of David Lloyd. As each wicket fell, the crowd remained seated and silent, save for sparse bunches of green-hats, who leaped up and down. Late in the day, Ealham and Caddick gave the home supporters something to cheer about, but Warne's parting words rang in the ears: "You'll be seeing the best of us from now on."

Sampras has fourth title in his sights

By Julian Muscat, Tennis Correspondent

PETE SAMPRAS strode purposefully towards a fourth Wimbledon title yesterday when he swept aside Todd Woodbridge, of Australia, in straight sets. Sampras was anxious to close out the match on another day punctuated by rain. He then made his excuses, leaving Cadric Plioline and Michael Stich jousting for the dubious honour of facing him tomorrow.

The honour is dubious because Sampras, who came through 6-2, 6-1, 7-6, touched sublime heights against an opponent who strived hard to stay with the world No 1. It made no difference. Sampras has refined the art of winning within himself, breaking out of a canter for the third-set tie-break. He breezed away with that, too, drawing eulogies from Woodbridge in the post-match analysis.

"Today I played one of the greatest tennis players, playing great," Woodbridge reflected. "It was a pleasure to be out there playing against him. Not many people get to appreciate how good a player he is when they are not on court with him. At least I got to see that side of it."

Sampras, whose two previous Wimbledon encounters with Woodbridge saw them share the honours, might have expected a tougher examination. Woodbridge, for his part, felt he had done all he could.

"There were winners flying about all over the place," he said. "I thought I played quite well and I think he has a pretty good chance to win this title again."

Should Sampras prevail tomorrow, he will move up to fourth place, with as many triumphs, in the all-time list of men's champions at Wimbledon. With all due respect to Stich and Plioline, it is hard to envisage what can stop him. Sampras, seeded No 1 for the fourth consecutive year, does not have an apparent weakness.

Admittedly, he struggled against Petr Korda, in the fourth round, losing consecutive tie-breaks before clinching the deciding set. One senses that, if he is to lose these championships, it will be through his own doing; he cannot surely be outplayed tomorrow.

Indeed, when Woodbridge broke him for the only time in the match to the third set, it

ended a run of 96 consecutive winning service games since his skirmish in the opening round with Mikael Tillström, of Sweden. Yesterday, he made 62 per cent of his first service — and accrued no double faults at all.

Evidence abounded of his superior class. In the first set, he faltered to 0-40 before producing three aces and two more thunderous services that Woodbridge reached only with the frame of his outstretched racket. "I don't remember a Wimbledon when I have served as well as I have this year," Sampras said.

He will also have enjoyed Woodbridge's propensity to rally from the baseline. It allowed Sampras the opportunity to assess the pace of the Centre Court — not that he required the practice, having



Results — 45
Lynne Truss — 46
Novotna's mission — 46

played five matches in as many days.

Sampras's demeanour here comes in total contrast to the man who succumbed without much fuss in the Stella Artois tournament at Queen's Club last month. On that occasion, Sampras seemed almost disinterested during his defeat by Jonas Bjorkman, of Sweden. The explanation rests entirely with Wimbledon's reputation among players. Its silverware is the most sought after — and Sampras has learnt to save himself for the big occasion.

"The major tournaments are what it is all about for me," he said. "I have a chance on Sunday to get another one. I am very motivated and ready to play. I have grown to love it. You can't play any careless tennis. I don't mind who I play in the final; either way, I feel like I'm playing well." Those words make an ominous warning.

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Film boost threatened by skills shortage

Tax breaks may increase British production but who will provide the know-how? Danya Alberge reports

LEADING film-makers expressed concern yesterday about the shortage of technicians to work on the extra films expected to be made after the boost to the industry from tax incentives announced in the Budget.

Sir David Putnam, whose films include *Chariots of Fire*, and David Green, who made the television documentaries *Hollywood Women*, called for the industry to invest in training programmes.

"I'm really struggling to find people at every level of the film business," Mr Green said. "There is a finite number of good technicians."

Sir David called on the industry to do something about increasing the "talent pool". He said that unless action was taken the health of the British film industry would be seriously harmed.

Mr Green spoke of a shortage of support staff at every level, including camera-operators, cinematographers, production managers and assistant directors. Even specialist accountants — those who understand the nature of the



Green: struggling to find the right people

feature film as a one-off project — are hard to come by. Britain was famous for the quality of its technicians but the best were being lured away by Hollywood, and by big-budget films being made in Britain by overseas producers. They could afford huge wages that low-budget films could never compete with. He noted that America had never been stronger: more American

producers were making films in Britain than ever before.

There has already been the pressure of a great increase in indigenous films. Last year, Britain made 100, almost doubling the figure of ten years ago. As recently as 1980, the total was just 38. At the peak of the industry, 1955 — the era of the Ealing comedies such as *The Ladykillers* — 150 films were British-made.

Roy Lockett, deputy general secretary of Bectu, the technicians' union, said: "There is a growing skills crisis." He called for a massive investment in training.

Mr Lockett noted that many of the people once employed in broadcasting had become freelancers, because of cost-cutting measures. The BBC was offering far less in-house training owing to a pressure on budgets. Also, budget-cuts on feature films meant that fewer assistants were being employed. That used to be a significant way for people to learn the trade. The industry, he said, must compensate for such changes. "There is clear evidence of shortages. The



Michael Bray, left, and Billy Hurman, right, on the set of their comedy *Sea Change* with Maryam d'Abo and Sean Chapman

crucial areas are training for new entrants and new technology."

At the low end, technicians are prepared to accept deferred payments; those at the top end can name their price. Finding technicians is not the only problem. Film-makers have long been concerned about the celluloid mountain.

Barely half the films made in Britain get a theatrical release because the cinemas are booked up with blockbusters from American studios which own the multiplexes.

Despite his concerns and criticisms, Mr Green welcomes the tax incentives. It will encourage the production of arthouse films such as his

recent *House of America*, to be released in October, "which wouldn't have been made without lottery money because arthouse films are not easy to finance."

Mr Green called on the industry to respond to the skill shortages, while acknowledging that there were "no quick solutions or easy answers".

Men with no name lure a Bond girl

By DALYA ALBERGE

PERSEVERANCE has paid off for two men who struggled for 4½ years to get their film script taken up by a production company.

Billy Hurman and Michael Bray would not take no for an answer when 30 British producers turned them down. Just as they were running out of companies to approach they found a producer prepared to invest £2 million.

Shooting began this week on *Sea Change*, a romantic comedy about a couple who try to balance high-powered careers with having a relationship. They managed to persuade Maryam d'Abo, a former Bond girl whose films include *The Living Daylights*, *The Browning Version* and *Out of Africa*, to take the lead role, and a cut in her usual fee. The film is being made in London and Spain.

Gary Smith, chief executive of Winchester Multimedia, whose most recent successes include *Shooting Fish*, said he was grabbed immediately by the script: "It's a tremendous story — very relevant for the world in the 1990s."

He felt that audiences would relate to "a guy who's very successful, spends a lot of time doing deals, has a girlfriend he decides to marry and gets his secretary to buy the ring. She turns him down — the first time he's been turned down — she wants him to be more ro-

mantic. The sea change is the whole change he wants to go through."

The film has already been sold to six countries, including Germany and Spain, and will be promoted at the Milan Film Festival. Leading fashion designers, including Catherine Walker and Margaret Howell, provided the costumes.

Mr Hurman, 40, made ends meet by working in marketing for various publications after graduating from Exeter University, where he studied economics. He wrote the script in a dilapidated two-bedroom flat in Shepherd's Bush. Mr Bray, who has acting experience, is directing the film.

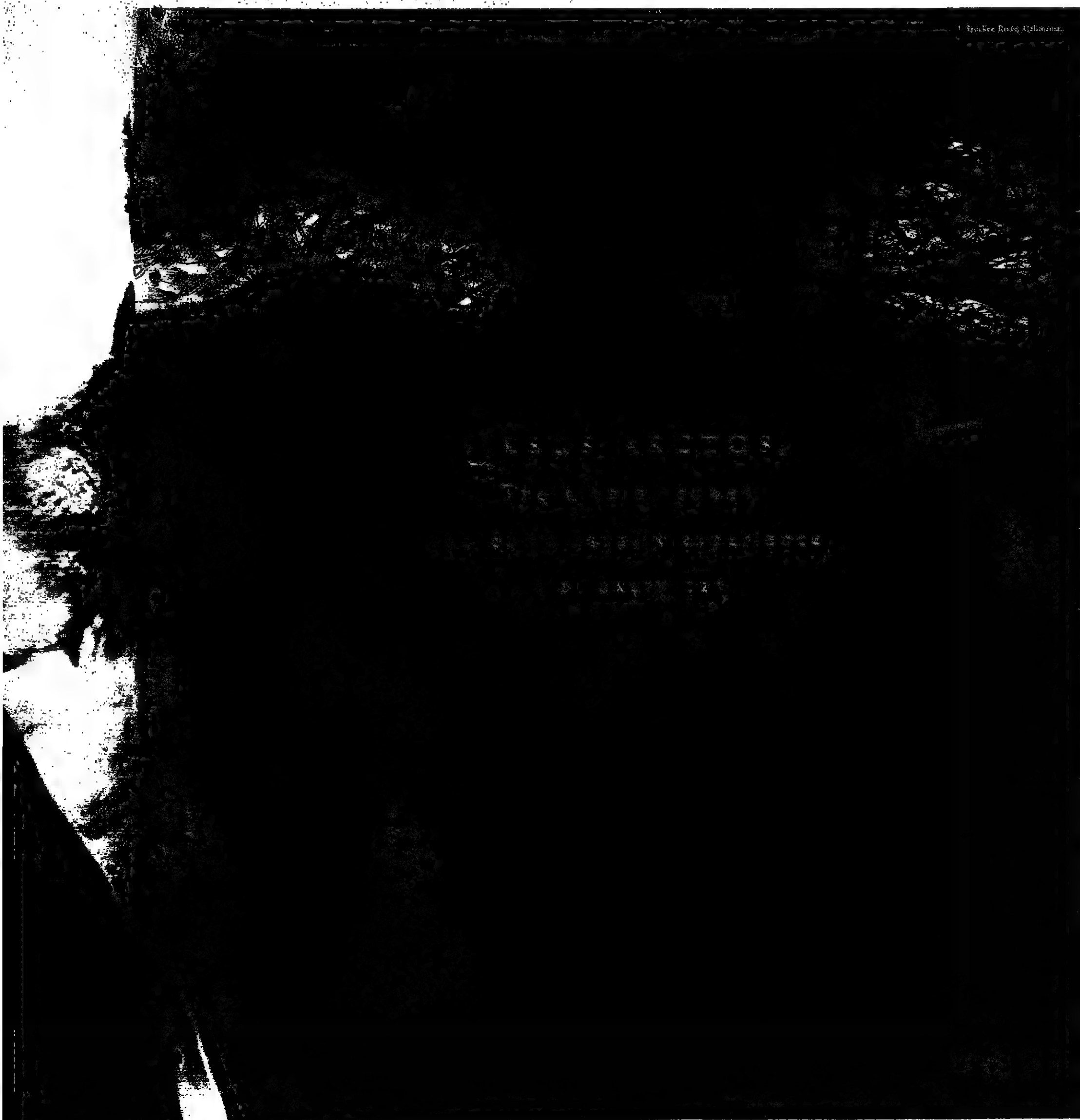
Mr Hurman said they found that people were obsessed with whether "you're a name in your field" and although production companies were keen on a low budget they wanted stars among the cast.

"Why haven't you got Hugh Grant?" they would ask him.

"Some were incredibly supportive and some incredibly dismissive. There were an awful lot of time wasters. It was a question of keeping going. You have to believe in what you're doing."

Whenever he reached the point of giving up, he would ask himself: "What are the alternatives? All I've ever wanted to do was get into film production."

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Montserrat youngsters turn to sex and drink in despair

FROM TOM RHODES IN MONTSERRAT

MANY of the young people of Montserrat, the Caribbean island threatened with destruction by its turbulent Chances Peak volcano, have found solace in alcohol and casual sex as they await their fate.

Clifford Farrell, a fireman and rescue worker in what traditionally has been a staunchly religious British colony, is one of many who has sent young families to Britain in search of a better life. "A lot of the young people swear and start fights," he said. "Young girls are getting pregnant and a lot of people are permanently drunk on rum. It is not the sort of environment that I want for my family."

Some teenage girls have turned to prostitution at weekends to earn extra money, and rapes have been reported.

At the Seventh Day Adventist Shelter in Salem, David Farrell, a former building worker, was close to despair. "You go berserk sometimes, searching all day for work and coming back empty-handed," he said. "And then you see girls as young as 13 going out to look for custom just for a few dollars. I think the British Government needs to take us all out of here."

Islanders are already leaving Montserrat in droves. Half the colony's nurses announced this week that the

volcano had become too dangerous and said that they were leaving for Britain.

Having complained for months about poor conditions at the makeshift hospital in St John's, the deaths of as many as 23 people in devastating lava flows last week proved the final straw.

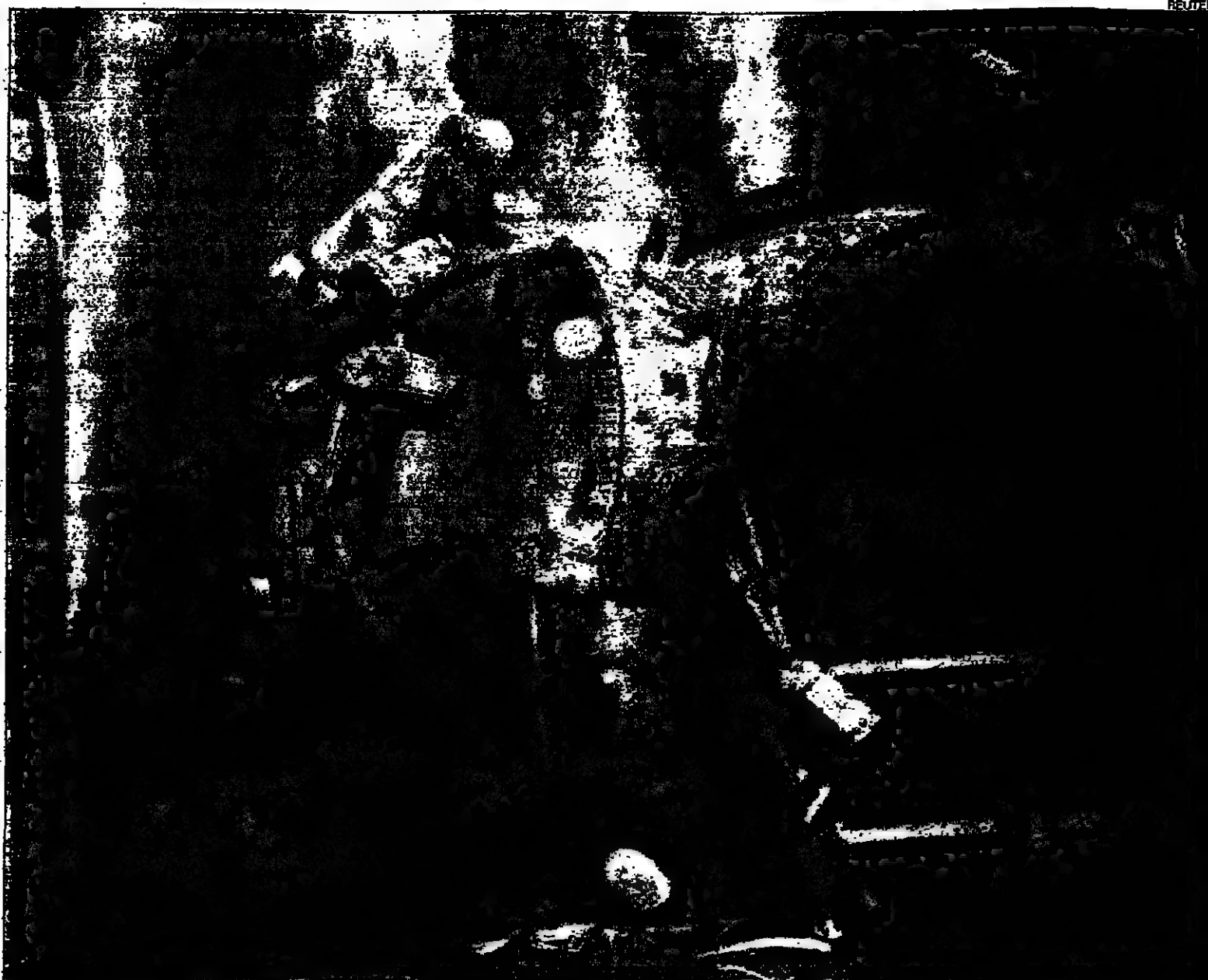
"It is no longer safe for ourselves, our families and the population to live in Montserrat," said 31 of the 50 nurses in a public letter requesting severance package arrangements from the local authorities.

Dozens of other government workers have taken a two-year leave of absence from their jobs to go to Britain. Bertrand Osborne, the island's Chief Minister, said he hoped the Government would react quickly to the crisis after Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean, the junior Foreign Office Minister, reported back to London on her visit to Montserrat this week.

"Without instant results, I think we will have a problem unless we can assure the people of Montserrat that there is hope of proper employment, housing and a hospital," he said. "I am sure that once they realise we are serious about building the infrastructure in the north, they will stay."

But with the fabric of society in steep decline and little sign that the volcano will cease its activity, Whitehall will have to act very quickly indeed if one of Britain's few remaining dependent territories is to be saved.

As Constable Standard Kelly, of the Montserrat Police Force, put it: "One day this island will go back to what it once was, but I think it is lost for my generation."



Space engineers at Russia's Star City perform tests 40ft underwater on a replica of the damaged Mir space station yesterday after vital repairs to the crippled craft were postponed to give its crew an extra week of training. The engineers were practising the crew's tricky repair job. Russian flight controllers have been feverishly looking for the best way to carry out the repair work on the

Mir rescue in deep water

damaged Spektr module, which was punctured in a collision with a cargo ship on June 25. The crew — including the British-born astronaut Michael Foale — needs time to get familiar with repair equipment being sent to Mir on a cargo ship

that blasts off today. Mir has been reduced to half-power since the collision and has problems with its alignment system. The repair effort will involve Mir's commander, Vasily Tsibilyev, going into the damaged module to re-connect cables from the solar batteries and run them back through a new, custom-designed hatch. "Such work never has been done before," said Viktor Rea, an official with the Cosmonauts Training Centre at Star City, just north of Moscow. Mir Rea organised yesterday's practice session in diving suits. "It can be accomplished, but it's going to be real tough," he said. (AP)

bles from the solar batteries and run them back through a new, custom-designed hatch. "Such work never has been done before," said Viktor Rea, an official with the Cosmonauts Training Centre at Star City, just north of Moscow. Mir Rea organised yesterday's practice session in diving suits. "It can be accomplished, but it's going to be real tough," he said. (AP)

Netanyahu flies into storm over luxury plane plan

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

THE Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, and his family were yesterday plunged into a political row over plans to spend more than \$600,000 refurbishing the Jewish state's equivalent of US Air Force One.

The costly refit is believed by Israeli officials to have been

influenced by Mr Netanyahu's wife, Sara, who has been at the centre of a number of personal scandals since he came to power and decided to give her a more prominent public role than those of previous Prime Ministers' wives.

According to the respected Tel Aviv daily *Haaretz*, plans are under way to fit the traditionally austere plane

used by the Prime Minister and President Weizman with a playroom for the Netanyahus' two children and a larger, more luxurious bedroom.

The popular President, who was first informed of the renovations via the Israeli media, was swift to denounce them as unnecessary and over-expensive. An Israeli source said that Mr Weizman was angry at not being con-

sulted and that he feared that he was being used as "cover" for improvements being done half in his name that he knew nothing about.

The costly renovations were reported to include the building-in of a double bed, bathroom and dressing table for Mrs Netanyahu. Israel's Air Force One is one of the world's least ostentatious official planes with a single bed for

the most important passenger and bunks for his officials.

□ Crisis deepens: The security crisis between Israel and the Palestinians sparked by posters depicting the Prophet Muhammad as a pig deepened yesterday with 29 Palestinians wounded in the West Bank city of Hebron in fierce riots staged in defiance of efforts by supporters of Yasser Arafat to halt them.

WORLD SUMMARY

'Amnesty' children revealed

Hong Kong: Hundreds of families rushed yesterday to surrender children smuggled in from China after an announcement that the illegal immigrants could stay while the background of their parents was checked.

The parents interpreted the ruling as an amnesty. While all residents' children may, under the Basic Law, now live in the territory, they must apply in mainland China and face a wait that could be years. (Reuters)

Inquiry falters

Paris: A court yesterday dropped a corruption inquiry into Jean Tiberi, the Gaullist Mayor of Paris, and his wife, because investigators had followed incorrect legal procedures (Ben Macintyre writes). In Marseilles, Bernard Tapie, the tycoon jailed for bribery, was given another 18 months for embezzling the Olympique football club.

Bomb suspect

Paris: Boualem Bensaid, an Algerian, is being formally investigated on suspicion of helping to organise the 1995 bomb attack on a Paris Métro train that killed eight people. Judges told relatives of the victims. They said that Mr Bensaid was the first suspect officially to be targeted in the investigation. (Reuters)

War aide dies

Johannesburg: General Friedrich Wilhelm von Mellenthin, former military intelligence chief for Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, has died in Johannesburg, aged 92. Born in Breslau, he emigrated in 1950 and led Lufthansa's South Africa operations from 1961 to 1969. (AFP)

Lost in transit

Canberra: Fifteen Sri Lankan boat people spent three days wandering lost in bushland after being dropped on Australia's remote western coast by a Taiwanese fishing boat and told they could find a bus or train to the nearest civilisation. (Reuters)

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German heavyweights prepare to sink their teeth into euro fight



Schröder: far ahead of Kohl in opinion polls

FROM ROGER BOYES
IN MUNICH

BURLY Gerhard Schröder is a political heavyweight: itching to climb into the ring with Helmut Kohl. Although the Social Democrat is unlikely to bite off the German leader's ear — he can still find a few nice things to say about the Chancellor — there will soon be some bare-knuckle punching on the euro.

There is a broad ragamuffin coalition of German interests in favour of delaying economic and monetary union. They include members of the Bundesbank board, retired but still influential central bankers, Edmund Stoiber, the Ba-

varian Prime Minister, and his conservative supporters, businessmen who are willing to take out full-page advertisements "in defence of the mark", and Social Democrats such as Herr Schröder.

Strange bedfellows? "You don't always have to disagree with your opponents," booms Herr Schröder, 53. "Not everything the opposing camp says is false, and there can be common ground on issues like this."

Herr Schröder, Prime Minister of Lower Saxony, has to win regional elections next March if he is to gain his party's full backing as official challenger to Herr Kohl. The general election will be held in September 1998, after the decisions

will have been made on who should take part in monetary union and whether it should start on schedule.

That means the battle for the euro has to be fought now rather than in the election campaign. "I don't believe that the euro will be the decisive element in the election. It will play a role but, if the decisions are made in the spring of 1998, then no new government will be able to change the course of events."

The new government — Herr Schröder believes a Social Democratic-Green coalition is the most probable alignment — will be faced with established facts on EMU. "Those of us who pointed early enough to the risks of monetary

union will have the edge over those who have been presenting monetary union as a risk-free enterprise."

But, if it seems that EMU is going hopelessly astray — if the public deficit target of 3 per cent of gross domestic product is not met — then a delay strategy should be implemented to restore popular trust in the euro. "I am in favour of a common currency, but the conditions for its introduction have to be right," Herr Schröder says.

From an economic point of view we can argue about whether the country really should meet the 3 per cent target precisely. But seen politically it is quite different. Germans have been told that stability

depends on exact fulfilment of the criteria on budget deficit and the debt. The Germans believed it — and now they are being told [that] we did not mean it quite so precisely. That stirs suspicion, undermines the legitimacy of the whole move."

Edmund Stoiber in Bavaria has been making similar pronouncements. This week Herr Kohl told him: "Three per cent, or 3.0 per cent — that is not my problem." This sphinx-like statement was interpreted as meaning that Herr Kohl has ruled out a fudge. In fact, it merely demonstrated the Chancellor's legendary vagueness about economics. The French were yesterday fuming

about his renewed commitment to the 3 per cent target, saying Germany's "pocket calculator approach" to the single currency could lead to the exclusion of France.

The next leader of Germany has to balance the need to modernise the country with the desire for social justice. Is Herr Schröder that man? "You are not going to get an answer from me, not yet. There are times when I have to present facts and let others draw conclusions."

The latest opinion polls show that, if the Chancellor were chosen by direct ballot, Herr Schröder would win about 60 per cent of the vote while Herr Kohl would be lucky to pick up more than 30 per cent.

Alliance goal speeds pace of East's reform

By MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR



THE promise of Nato membership has been the biggest single spur for change in Eastern Europe.

The prospect of joining the alliance they were once obliged to regard as the enemy has forced a radical reorganisation of the former Warsaw Pact countries' military commands, secured civilian control of their armies and pushed their governments into negotiating treaties to end ethnic and border conflicts.

For the three front-runners, Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic, Nato membership is seen not only as a vital security umbrella: it is also regarded as an endorsement by the West of their democratic and market reforms since the collapse of communism and a symbolic reintegration into the mainstream of European culture and identity.

For Romania and Slovenia, two aspirant members which seem likely to be disappointed in Madrid on Tuesday, Nato

membership has for the past year become virtually a national crusade. Every party, every politician and every shade of opinion has focused on the urgency of not being left out of the first wave. And it, as now seems inevitable, neither is admitted, the reaction in both could be explosive: frustration and anger could destabilise the young democracies, fan ethnic tensions and call into question recent agreements with neighbours.

The country that has been most insistent on membership has been Poland. For the Poles, Nato is not only a long-term guarantee that their independence will never again be threatened: it is also an assertion of their Roman

Catholic, Western-leaning culture and their difference from the Orthodox East. Poland is by far the largest of the new members, with armed forces totalling 250,000. For the past five years the forces have been reorganised in an attempt to remove all traces of the old integration into the East and take advantage of joint exercises with the West.

Hungary, also with long memories of Soviet invasion and intervention, sees Nato as a bulwark against any revived Russian expansionism. Membership, however, necessitates a big expansion because Hungarian forces number only 60,000 men. Soviet-era officers have been replaced, staff structures reformed, training reshaped and more than 700 officers have graduated from Western military academies.

Hungary plans to set up a 2,000-man professional force for rapid deployment on Nato missions by 1999, and the Defence Ministry is talking about eliminating conscription by

2010. The defence budget is set to rise sharply. The forces still rely heavily on Russian equipment, however, and large sums will be needed to pay for new Western weapons. Americans arms salesmen are touting for business.

The cost of Nato is not popular and Hungarians are probably less enthusiastic than their neighbours about their new military alliance. The Czechs, too, have been sceptical about the benefits of membership, although the defence establishment sees opportunities for the country's arms industry. There has been little national debate and the Government has presented membership virtually as a fait accompli.

The Czechs, now separated from Russia by Slovakia and Ukraine, see no immediate threat from Moscow and probably would have preferred European Union membership first because their free-market economy is closely tied to the West's.

Squabbles could leave summit the loser

PRESIDENT CLINTON, Tony Blair and Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, are expected to unite to apply maximum pressure on fellow Nato members to agree to an enlargement programme of only three countries in the first wave when they meet on Tuesday (Michael Evans, Defence Correspondent, writes).

Despite intensive negotiations, there is still no consensus on how many to invite

for accession talks. Some Nato members are still pushing for four or five. Senior Nato diplomats are resigned to there being no agreement before Tuesday and to President Clinton wanting to argue Romania's case at the summit.

A few months ago it was hoped that there would be a decision — with the chosen countries told — well before Madrid. Poland, the Czech Republic and

Hungary are on the confirmed list, but France is among those Nato members reluctant to give up the case for including Romania and Slovenia.

One Nato source said, if the argument is not resolved on Tuesday, the summit will be a failure — a huge setback for an organisation desperately trying to demonstrate that it has changed dramatically since the Cold War ended.

La Lollo's ageless glamour draws breathless praise

'Carnal, earthy, vital, vibrant' at 70

FROM RICHARD OWEN
IN ROME

GINA LOLLOBRIGIDA, the legendary star of Italian cinema, yesterday celebrated her 70th birthday by declaring that she had buried her life-long feud with her rival, Sophia Loren — more or less. She also insisted that, although she had been "in love" with Fidel Castro, the Cuban dictator, their relationship had been "Platonic".

The Italian media pulled out all the adjectives they could think of to celebrate La Lollo's birthday. "A symbol of Latin beauty," said *Il Messaggero*, "opulent, bewitching, carnal, earthy, vital, vibrant, elegant, imperial, an ambassador of Italian glamour to the world", before grinding to a breathless halt.

Signora Lollobrigida, on the other hand, took it all calmly, observing that at her age every day was a celebration. In any case, "cinema is a team effort," she told *La Stampa*. "That is why I took up photography, painting and sculpture — they give you more opportunity to express your inner self."

But for most people the enduring image of La Lollo is of her standing in a fetching circus outfit next to a semi-naked Burt Lancaster in *Trapeze* (1956), or as the wide-eyed peasant girl in a low-cut dress in *Bread, Love and Dreams* (1953), which was shown on Italian television yesterday in tribute. "She still has the most celebrated décolletée of the century," said *Il Messaggero*.

"I do feel sorry for those poor girls who have silicone implants," observed Signora Lollobrigida. "But if they have a complex and surgery helps, good luck to them."

A carpenter's daughter, she was a beauty contest model before making her screen debut in 1946, later making many films with director Vittorio De Sica. Her later



Signora Lollobrigida, the toast of Italy yesterday on her 70th birthday, and still a symbol of Latin beauty

Hollywood career included successes such as *Buona Sera, Mrs Campbell* (1969).

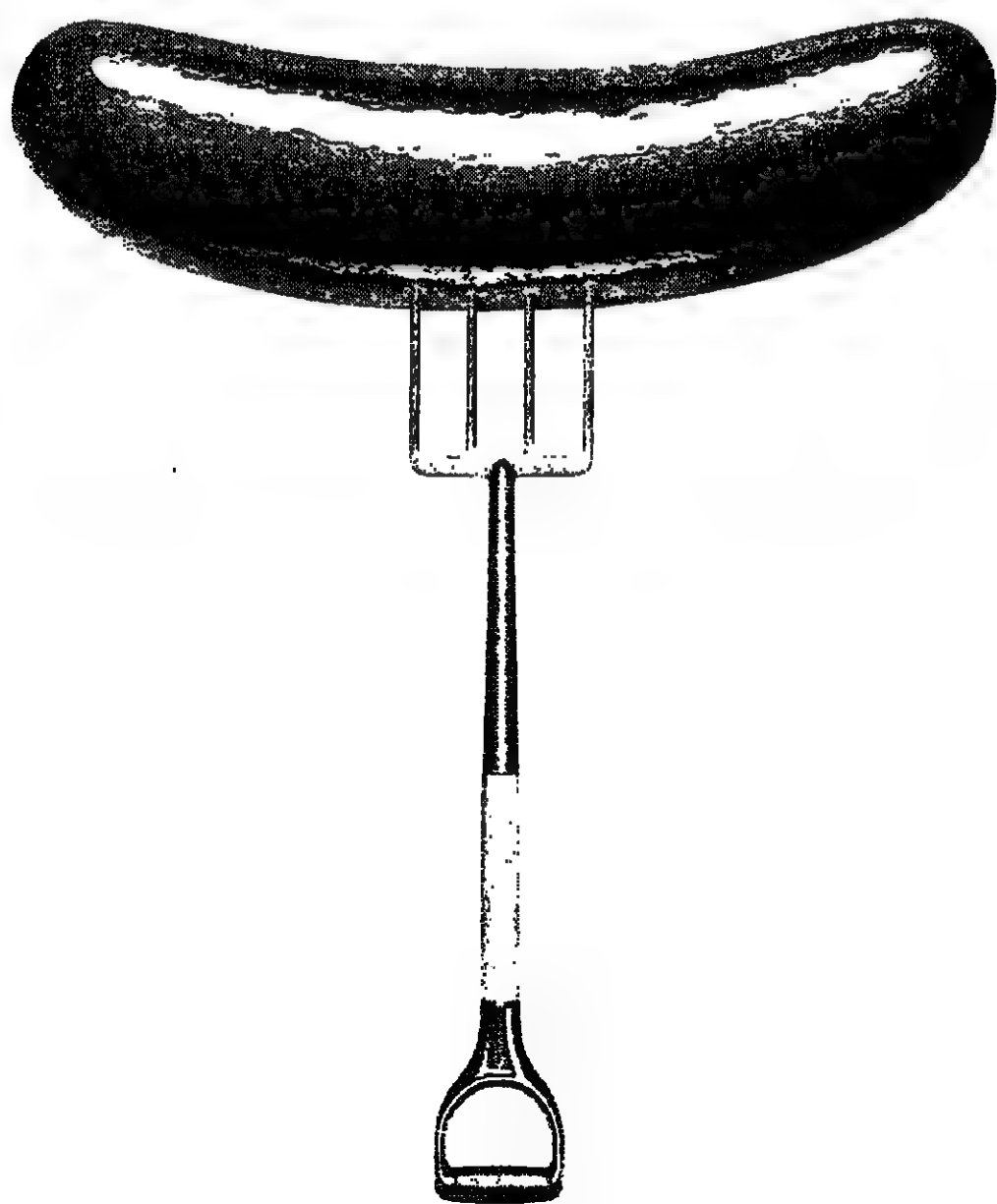
It is her Italian triumphs, such as *The Woman of Rome* (1954), and the sultry *Solomon and Sheba* (1959) which stay in the mind. Signora Lollobrigida now lives alone in a villa on the Via Appia reflecting on a life "in which nobody gave me any free gifts". After her divorce from the Yugoslav, Milko Skofic, she "never found the right man". Her lovers included the South African heart transplant surgeon, Christian

Barnard, but "I found I was too independent ... in any case, men find successful women troublesome".

And Fidel Castro? "People always ask me if I made love to Fidel. What can I say? It was he who said he had lost his head over me, not the other way round ... I got to know him well, and yes, we were in love, but it was Platonic". As for her rival, Sophia Loren: "Well, when we meet nowadays, as we sometimes do, we greet each other. We have even been photographed together."



La Lollo as Sheba with celebrated décolletée



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'Insensitive Britain' shocks Holocaust victim's son

FROM PETER CAPELLA IN GENEVA

THE Hungarian-born son of a Holocaust victim who tried to retrieve his father's prewar savings in the London branch of a Swiss bank was told repeatedly by the Department of Trade that it was confiscated as "enemy property".

Dr Peter Csango first inquired about the account when the Cold War eased briefly in 1963. He made a formal written request after fleeing from Hungary in 1969. Dr Csango, now living in Norway, repeated the exercise after post-graduate studies in Britain in 1972 and made a half-hearted attempt again late last year as Swiss banks came under pressure over dormant Holocaust assets.

Despite Hungary being an ally of Nazi Germany, he was so shocked at the insensitive British handling of the case that he will try once more only if he receives some official support. "I have not given up, but purely psychologically it is tiring," he says. Based on notes kept by his grandparents, Dr Csango also tried for a quarter of a century to find if there were family savings in western Switzerland and in France, without success.

The Swiss Bank Corporation (SBC) confirmed in a letter last year that Ferenc Csango, his father, held \$1,900 (£1,140) at its branch in London in 1939. Ferenc, a Jew, was deported by the Nazis in March 1942 to serve in a forced-labour battalion on the Russian front. He never returned and was probably killed during a Soviet counter-offensive near Gorky in January 1943. About a tenth of the 70,000 Hungarian Jews in the battalions survived.

Dr Csango, an only child, was born two months after his 33-year-old father, was taken away. "I was baptised, otherwise I would not have survived," he says.

Ferenc's deposit was frozen by the Government during the war, classified as enemy property and confiscated from SBC. When Dr Csango approached the British authori-

ties in 1963, they admitted there had been an account. But an official at the then Board of Trade said he could not have the money.

There is no written correspondence on this meeting because Dr Csango did not want the Hungarian authorities to know about it while he and his mother still lived in Budapest.

In a reply to a written appeal in 1969, the Board of Trade's finance branch wrote that Dr Csango could be considered for an "ex-gratia" payment provided he supplied documentary proof of his father's fate and sworn declarations "by two other persons with first-hand knowledge of the facts alleged". He was told, however, that "forced labour is not normally regarded as a deprivation of liberty". The letter also hinted that his chances of receiving even a charitable payment were slim.

"Consideration will be given to your application provided that facts for ex-gratia payments are still available when satisfactory evidence is received," it said. "I cannot see the difference between dying in a camp or on forced labour in Russia; they died of exhaustion or they were shot," Dr Csango says.

The Board of Trade's response was a mirror-image of some of the insensitive replies Holocaust victims received from the Swiss banks and authorities until recently.

When he tried again with SBC in London in August, the bank was the first to explain that in strict legal terms the account was seized and handed to the Hungarian Government under an agreement with Britain in 1963. Britain also recovered assets and property in Hungary. The bank repeated previous advice to contact the "Custodian for Enemy Property" at the Department of Trade.

Hungary became firmly Communist in 1948, and none of the heirs of Holocaust victims was aware of the right to reclaim money in Western countries. Dr Csango felt that

On forced labour they died of exhaustion or they were shot



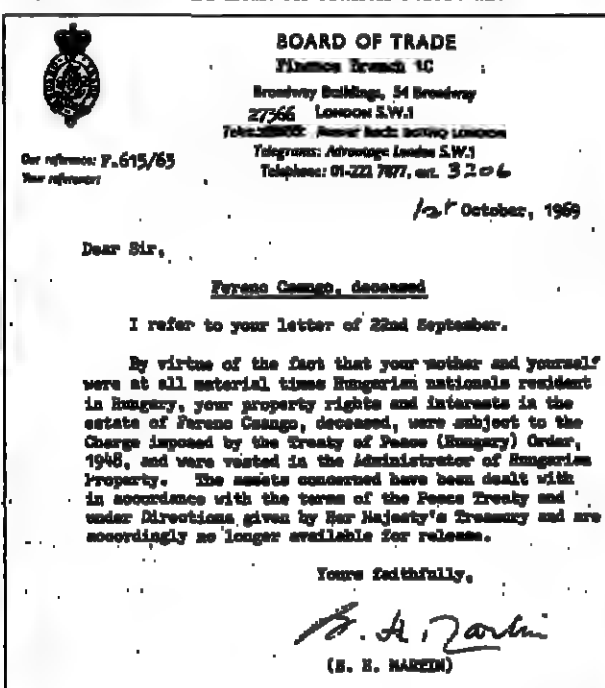
Peter Csango feels that he owes it to his father, a Holocaust victim, to win back "confiscated" savings left in a Swiss bank's London branch before the war



Ferenc Csango, his wife Magda, and the letter sent by the Board of Trade in October 1969 rejecting Peter Csango's belated claim to his father's property

it would have been too dangerous to try, even if he had known, because it would have shown ties beyond the Iron Curtain.

SBC told Dr Csango that the bilateral agreements later fell into disarray "and the British Government agreed that in



cases of extreme hardship they would reimburse the enemy citizens themselves".

Dr Csango is 55 now, a Norwegian citizen with three children and a successful career as a microbiologist. He objects to the agreements between Britain and

Hungary, which fail to examine if any of the private accounts handed over belonged to victims of persecution, saying: "This is morally wrong."

He adds: "I am not pursuing this for the money, I feel I owe it to my father."

Karadzic hardliners defy woman leader

BY TOM WALKER

HARDLINE members of the Republika Srpska parliament held a crisis session yesterday in defiance of an order disbanding it by Biljana Plavsic, the Bosnian Serb president. The move by Mrs Plavsic is directed at the clandestine might of Radovan Karadzic, the indicted war criminal.

Yesterday the collision course was set for order for new elections on September 1 was to be ignored, and the hardline Serbs were preparing to dismiss Mrs Plavsic from office.

She was supported yesterday by 7,000 demonstrators who gathered outside her office in the northern town of Banja Luka and urged her not to give way. "I am sorry this happened, but crime must be stopped," Mrs Plavsic told them. "War victims did not fall for a state of thieves, but for a state of honest people."

Whoever wins this power struggle, it is unlikely that Republika Srpska can survive. If the Karadzic camp prevails, the eastern part of Republika Srpska and its mountain capital of Pale — the power base for Dr Karadzic — might try to join Serbia proper.

In the most optimistic scenario, Mrs Plavsic's western

half, including Banja Luka, the largest town, would then become a form of Serb canton. Bosnia-Herzegovina would consist of this new canton plus the Muslim-Croat Federation centred on Sarajevo. Bosnia as defined by the Dayton Peace Accord would be missing its eastern flank.

The final schism has been waiting to happen since February, when Mrs Plavsic placed an advertisement in Serbian papers calling for an investigation into the export of import companies controlled by Dr Karadzic and Momcilo Krajisnik, the Serb member of Bosnia's Muslim-Serb-Croat state presidency.

The power of Dr Karadzic's long and unseen hand became apparent there was no investigation.

The Karadzic-Krajisnik companies are called Centrex and Select-Impey, and bring in massive revenues from contraband, swelling the warchests of their owners. Police sources in Banja Luka have spoken of whole teams of customs police being replaced by Karadzic loyalists overnight, as planes laden with cigarettes and alcohol land at the town's military airport. Dr Karadzic controls a nationwide secret police

network, which leaves most Bosnian Serbs terrified of divulging the inner workings of their republic.

"The consequence of this is an enormous accumulation of wealth by a relatively small number of our population," Mrs Plavsic said in an extraordinary address from the Banja Luka studio of state television. "Do they think that the rest of the population will be their slaves?" Yesterday government officials closed the studio.

How far Mrs Plavsic's brinkmanship can be pushed will depend on the support given her by the international community. America in particular has invested heavily in aid and quasi-political offices in Banja Luka in recent months, and Nato's Stabilisation Force troops appear ready to help keep the peace in the town, the base for Britain's biggest troop contingent.

The Hague Slavko Dokmanovic, 47, a Serb and former Mayor of Vukovar, pleaded not guilty at a UN war crimes tribunal to charges of involvement in the abduction and murder of hundreds of men from the Croatian town's hospital in November, 1991. (Reuters)

LIMITED SPACES IN AUGUST



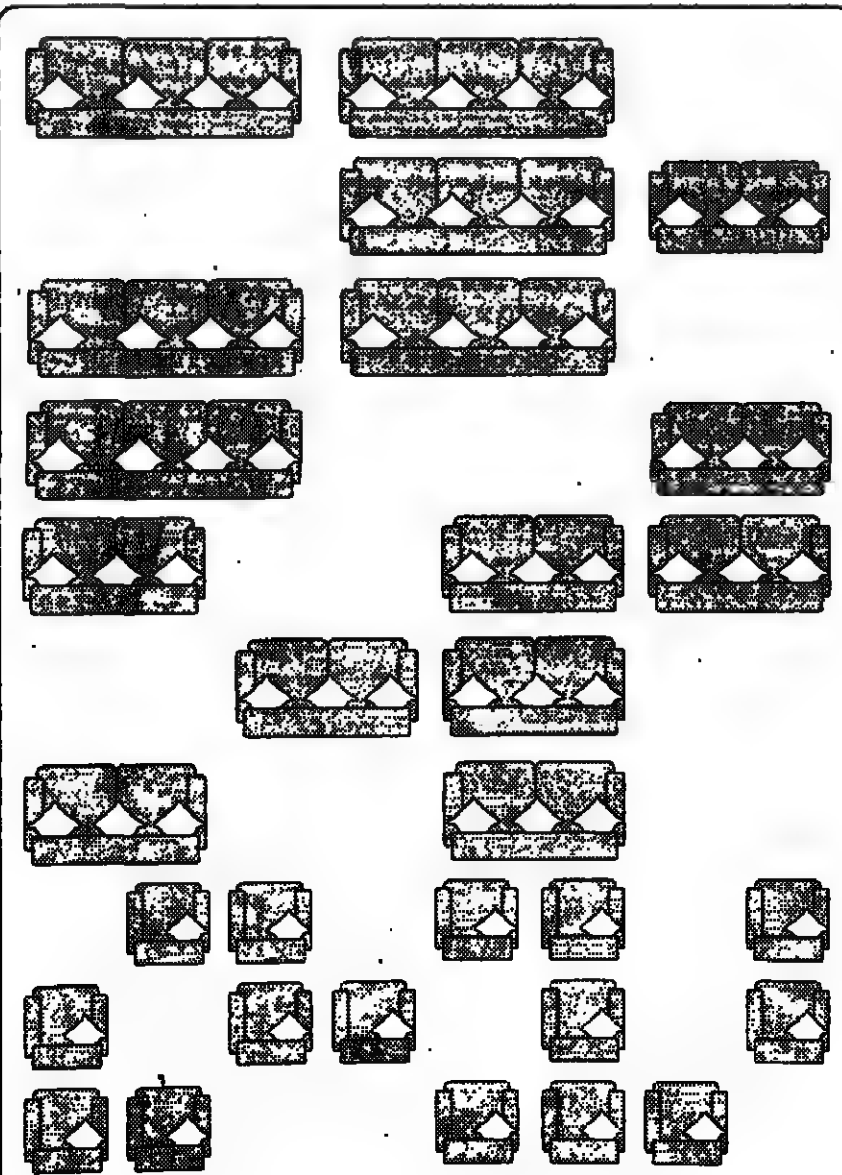
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Pistol-packing Pretender will fight poll 'fraud'

FROM TOM WALKER IN TIRANA

LEKA ZOG has absolved himself of all responsibility for Thursday's bloody and bizarre shootout outside the Central Election Commission in the middle of Tirana, the capital of Albania. He claims that he is powerless to bring a halt to royalist rallies.

"It is not a question of demonstrations. This is the will of the Albanian people," the son of the country's last King said at his villa, the scene of much frantic diplomatic negotiation yesterday.

The American and British Ambassadors came and went with messages of peace, but the pistol-packing Leka vowed to continue his fight against what he says is a fraudulently elected Socialist Government blocking his natural right to the throne.

"The people are demonstrating all over the country. From south to north they are disgusted with the election results," Leka had swapped his military uniform for a safari suit, but still wore his calf-length black army boots in the middle of his sitting room. "I just happened to be wearing a uniform yesterday," he said.

The Albanian election process has turned this week from farce to tragedy and into dangerous stalemate. Yesterday an important element — results — were still missing and a second round of voting planned for tomorrow may be postponed. Leka's unique contribution of a town centre gunfight has become an all-consuming sideshow, with royalists and Democrats giving press conferences angrily

blaming the Socialists, and Bashkim Fino, the Prime Minister, pointing the finger at Leka's well-armed highland clan, which he says is being used by the hardliners of Sali Berisha, the President.

"I don't get used very easily. I look after the interests of my people," retorted Leka, fishing a cigarette from his ever-present pack of Rothmans.

"We didn't carry out an armed action, believe me, our people are better equipped than the pistols you saw yesterday." His description of the Central Election Commission battle resembled a military debriefing.

"I told people to disperse and I was within three metres of my vehicle. Then there was a hail of fire on the square," he said. He rattled out the names of those in the Socialist-controlled police unit he held responsible for the shooting, which killed one man and wounded five others.

He says he will not call for another referendum on the restoration of the monarchy if this one fails, as most estimations suggest it will. In that case, he says, he will appeal to the constitutional court, many of whose members were seen waving to him during Thursday's debate.

Rome: Italy will begin its withdrawal of troops in the multinational security force from Albania on July 18 and expects to complete it by August 10. Massimo Bruti, a Defence Ministry under-secretary said. (Reuters)

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Single-minded legal campaign against Juppé pays off for preppy young lawyer

Champion of the Left

AT 34, Arnaud Montebourg has a seat in the French National Assembly, a weekly column in one of the country's most influential magazines, a reputation as France's toughest left-wing lawyer and the unalloyed adoration of the Socialist Party.

The boy done good. Better, indeed, than might have been expected of one who left the Socialist Party in 1990 and who, 18 months ago, was still railing against the Left. "Party politics here is carried out with all the openness of a Vatican cabal. I'd rather have nothing to do with it," he told a British journalist in October 1995.

M. Montebourg's change of heart and his sudden elevation to the summit of the Socialist Party were the direct result of his single-minded, aggressive and highly successful legal campaign against Alain Juppé, the ousted Gaullist Prime Minister.

Elegance is stressed

WHAT with high-level corruption and art thieves, Paris lawyers are feeling overworked and under pressure. But the designer Pierre Cardin has come up with a solution: anti-stress robes, the sartorial equivalent of Prozac. M. Cardin's legal robes are "woven through with small particles of metal so that the cloth ensures the removal of static electricity,

the source of stress". The legal outfit, which also claims to offer "an impeccable silhouette of perfect elegance", was commissioned by Maison Boss, "Costumier to the Courts since 1845".

According to the designer, orders from freaked-out lawyers are flooding in for the robes, which go on sale in September at Fr5,000 (£500) a twirl.

PARIS FILE
by BEN
MACINTYRE



ter. As the lawyer for the Association of Paris Taxpayers, M. Montebourg accused the Prime Minister of misusing his former position as Deputy Mayor of Paris to obtain luxury, rent-reduced accommodation for himself and his family.

Despite his preppy appearance, complete with Armani suits, Oxford brogues and gold-rimmed spectacles, the lawyer from an academic Dijon family has the instincts of a street fighter and his crusade against the Prime Minister was a bloody, bare-knuckled affair. The duel became so personal that M.

Juppé, a man who seldom betrays emotion, was said to change colour and rant at the mention of M. Montebourg's name.

Finally, after months of legal wrangling during which M. Montebourg became a regular fixture on the evening news, a judge ruled that M. Juppé had indeed been guilty of a conflict of interest. The franc plunged briefly. The Prime Minister was humiliated and forced to move out of his flat. Arnaud Montebourg ascended, immediately, into the Socialist pantheon.

There were many reasons why M. Juppé and the Gaullists lost the elections, but M. Montebourg and the seam of corruption he had exposed at the highest level of government, were among the most telling.

It was a sign of the Socialists' gratitude that M. Montebourg soon found himself back in the bosom of the party and running for parliament. Lionel Jospin, the Socialist leader and now Prime Minister, went to M. Montebourg's constituency in Bressan only days before the election to give his benediction to the

David who helped to slay the Gaullist Goliath.

Soft-spoken but hard-eyed, the soigné young lawyer has become the nearest thing the Socialist Party has to a male pin-up. His column in the leftist magazine *L'Événement du Jeudi*, entitled "Notes from a Brand-New MP", carries a photograph of M. Montebourg smiling dreamily into the middle distance.

The ferociously ambitious M. Montebourg has been catapulted into the very Socialist "cabal" he once condemned, but in his column he plays the naïf: "I felt like a foreign tourist, speaking quietly in order not to disturb anyone," he wrote of his first visit to the National Assembly, while clearly relishing his notoriety. "Alain Juppé did not want to recognise me. He smiled at me a little nervously."

"Have you got your bullet-proof vest?" a fellow Socialist asked him.

Investigations into alleged corruption over Paris municipal housing are still under way and rumours of imminent further disclosures are rife.

Jean Tiberi, the Paris Mayor and MP embroiled in the scandal, "studiously avoids me and clings to the wall," the lawyer reports happily, in the certain knowledge that it is not himself, but his political and legal enemies who are most acutely in need of legal armament.



Arnaud Montebourg's street-fighter instincts, fuelled by his ferocious ambition, have catapulted him into the highest reaches of the French Socialist Party.

'Viscount' made art of crime

THE French art world lost one of its staunchest defenders this month, with the retirement of a policeman and art connoisseur known as "The Viscount", whose ability to trace stolen treasures made him a legend in the Paris gendarmerie.

"The Viscount", identified only as "Christian de B.", has always insisted on anonymity, but was only too well known in the Paris criminal world. His prodigious memory and expertise, now made redundant by computerisation, "struck terror into art traffickers," *Libération* said last week.

A descendant of an aristocratic family, the retired and retiring "Viscount" was, by his own account, "a good-for-nothing" with a passion for art and antiques. "Give him a silver spoon and two days later he could tell you exactly where it came from," a colleague said.

His most impressive coup came in 1988, when a large collection of paintings was stolen from the Paris flat of an elderly duchess, who was so rich she could not remember what had been on the walls. But the Viscount could, and gradually worked out exactly what was missing.

Three years later the thief was caught, and "the Viscount's" inventory was found to have been picture-perfect.

Angry volcano seen as omen for change in Mexican elections

By TURNIK VARADARAJAN
IN MEXICO CITY
AND DAVID ADAMS



Zedillo: introduced electoral reforms

MEXICO'S ruling party could face the most stunning sequence of defeats in its 68-year history tomorrow when elections take place for the entire lower house of Congress, a quarter of the Senate, six state governorships and the post of Mayor of Mexico City.

Meanwhile, the Popocatepetl volcano rumbles menacingly 40 miles

from here. It last erupted in 1925, during the revolution which ended with the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) taking power. Mexicans see its discontent as an omen of important change.

The PRI, which has excluded all other parties from power since its first took a grip of the country in 1929, is bracing itself. Genuine electoral reforms introduced by President Zedillo, as well as the presence of a myriad of foreign observers, have ensured that the

polls will be the fairest ever in the country's fraud-scarred history. Importantly, they could also mark the belated coming of age in Mexico of a multi-party democracy.

The most substantial gains are expected to be made by the left-wing opposition Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD), led by Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas. Named after the last Aztec ruler to resist the Spanish conquistadores, he is the son of Lázaro Cárdenas, arguably the most popular President Mexico has

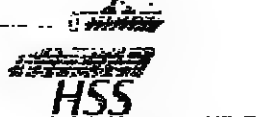
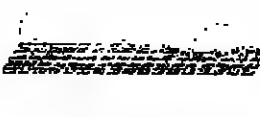
ever had. Señor Cárdenas is standing for the post of Mexico City's Mayor. His mestizo physiognomy mirrors that of many Mexicans, and he is profoundly popular with the working classes. It is now universally acknowledged that he was robbed of the presidency in the 1988 elections, when the Government's computers "collapsed" while he was leading in the electoral count. When the computers restarted, the PRI's hand-picked candidate, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, had won.

All Mexico's eyes are on the mayoral race. There has never been an election for the post before, and the PRI's candidate, Alfredo del Mazo, is in danger of drowning in a sea of votes for Señor Cárdenas. If Señor Cárdenas wins — which is regarded as a foregone conclusion — he is sure to use the city hall as a staging post for the presidential elections in 2000. If he does the Mayor's job well, he will be the favourite to rule Mexico in the new millennium. Yet his ascent, and that

of his party, has caused concern in Washington. He is a critic of NAFTA, the free-trade agreement that has unified the markets of Mexico, Canada and the United States. With the PRI expected to take up to 33 per cent of the vote, the most likely outcome of the election is the first Mexican hung parliament this century. Señor Cárdenas's PRD is expected to win about 23 per cent of the vote, with about 25 per cent going to the conservative National Action Party (PAN).

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■ OPINION

Jolly Rogers should another big lottery award go to new Labour's favourite architect?

■ THEATRE

Not quite the best of all possible worlds: Voltaire's *Candide* is staged at the Gate

THE TIMES ARTS

■ GOING OUT

From the British debut of the spectacular new touring show by Michael Jackson ...

■ GOING OUT

... to the Kirov Ballet's London season: the week's top events are listed today in *The Times Directory*

Is the South Bank a roof too far?

How swiftly the sweet taste of political victory turns acrid when the hot potatoes start rolling in. Two months ago, Chris Smith was a hero. Cultured, bright, sensitive in all the right spots, he seemed the perfect man to be Tony Blair's first arts *Obergruppenführer*.

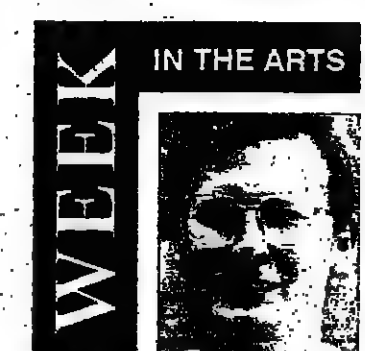
What a difference nine weeks makes. No other minister has endured more dispiriting humiliations than nice Mr Smith from the Department of National Heritage. Indeed, the DNH is again living up to its disgraceful nickname: the Dump for No-Hoppers.

Consider the decline in his fortunes. With his feet barely under the mahogany, he was all but hoodwinked into approving the transfer of Mary Allen from the Arts Council to its biggest client, the Royal Opera House, without even the pretence of a job interview. The Labour Party has had 18 years to think about how to sort out the mess at Covent Garden. Yet within 18 days of taking power, its minister is unwittingly compromised by a typical Covent Garden stitch-up. First black mark.

Then he decided to call in Camerons' bosses, rant about how much they were making from the National Lottery, and demand that they donate their bonuses to charity. Oh dear. Theodore Roosevelt advised politicians to speak softly and carry a big stick. Nice Mr Smith spoke *fortissimo* and waggled a twitchy twig. He had to climb down. Cashalot's profitable arrangements remain as they were. Second black mark.

Yet the biggest humiliation was still to come. The Prime Minister finally decided that the Millennium Dome could be built, and that Greenwich would have its preposterous £300 million party on the stroke of Two-Triples-O. So to whom does he turn to ensure that the planning is efficient and imaginative? Not his trusty Heritage Secretary. No, nice Mr Smith is allowed into the wings. Instead, out steps Peter Mandelson, Minister without Portfolio. Mr Smith, being a nice chap, probably doesn't regard this as an snub. Believe me, Christie, it is.

What, then, does the future hold for our nice Mr Smith? Regrettably, more bad news. Yet another scorching potato-



RICHARD MORRISON

is splotching straight into his lap. After more than a year of fraught secret meetings the Arts Council is about to announce whether the South Bank Centre (the Festival Hall and its glassy concrete satellites) is to get an enormous lottery handout — it could be bigger than Covent Garden's — to pay for a mega-course of cosmetic surgery. This would chiefly involve covering up the despised Queen Elizabeth Hall and Hayward Gallery with a big glass roof, thus creating lots of bistro-friendly indoor piazzas in which trendy Londoners can feed and frolic.

Well, no sane person would oppose wrapping up the Hayward Gallery, unless the alternative is complete demolition. Unfortunately for nice Mr Smith, however, the architect of the new South Bank roof is none other than our old friend, the aptly named Lord Rogers of Riverside. Which means that all manner of delicate liaisons must be considered.

It will be recalled, for instance, that Sir Richard Rogers (as he was then) was deputy chairman of the Arts Council at the very time (March 1995) when the council decided to give the South Bank Centre £980,000 for a "feasibility study" into the redevelopment scheme devised by ... E. Rogers. And he was still deputy chairman in July 1996 when the council examined this study and decided that it was so far from being feasible that a further £1.2 million needed to be spent drawing up new plans.

Of course, Rogers very properly "left

the room" when the council discussed the South Bank. But many eyebrows were raised at such a close relationship between givers and receivers of lottery largesse. Good grief, imagine the scandal if the very people on the Arts Council who gave £78 million to the Royal Opera House suddenly found themselves spending the money at Covent Garden! Since then, however, the Rogers Situation has become even more complicated. The architect has been created a working Labour peer. He and his restaurateur wife Ruthie are dear friends of Tony and Cherie. The Millennium Dome approved by Mr Blair last month is a Rogers design. How much of its gigantic budget will go to Lord Rogers's company is a matter for speculation. But when the new millennium supreme, Mr Mandelson, actually starts parading Lord Rogers's famous phrase about constructing a "string of pearls" along the Thames (the "pearls", of course, often being Lord Rogers's own projects, from Greenwich to his new £80 million penthouses at Battersea), you have to wonder, again, whether there should be such a warm and loving relationship between those who distribute state patronage and those who benefit so handsomely from it.

So how does nice Mr Smith handle all this? The answer is, he's damned either way. The South Bank does need its facelift: it's the most conspicuous pile of creepy-crawly passageways in central London, and a real turn-off to lone concertgoers late at night. Equally, Mr Smith — shaken and scarred by his Covent Garden experience — will be all too aware that "jobs for the cronies" mud will fly if Lord Rogers gets another plum lottery commission.

Goak, I wouldn't like to be in nice Mr Smith's shoes. Observing him trying to defuse this booby-trap will surely be the most diverting sideshow of the summer. They should stage it on Cromer Pier. Cameron Mackintosh could produce it. Mark McCormack could sell tickets — and Mr Mandelson, Minister without Portfolio, could step in to "save the day" after watching his colleague slowly twist in the wind.

THEATRE: Benedict Nightingale sees *Candide* transcend its adaptation

Voltaire still in charge

Murray Gold, the author of this *Candide* if unremarkable adaptation of Voltaire (at the Gate, W1), clearly has it in for a chap called Jolyon. At any rate, he has dedicated his play to someone of that name — in the hope that he has found the best of all possible worlds. But that is the philosopher Pangloss's description of a planet where nature is brutal and most of the people are worse. To invite poor old Jolyon to settle in such a place is a bit like sending him a wish-you-were-here card from the Siberian Gulag.

On second thoughts, maybe the invitation is less malevolent than it might have been. Pangloss's world does not emerge from David Farr's production looking and feeling quite as vicious as it does from Voltaire's novel. The mood is humorous, which it should be.

but also light, which it shouldn't. As a contribution to "a select season of European satire" — the Gate's tag for its current batch of work — it should surely be harder, tougher, more sardonic. More imaginative, too — or what is the point of bringing *Candide* to the stage, instead of encouraging the populace to read or reread it? The story comes in tiny bursts, punctuated by blackouts. Laura Hopkins's set is a green-grey concrete wall in front of which a sort of overblown mosquito net sometimes materialises. Virtually the only props are

South America, given a glimpse of Eldorado, robbed in Surinam, conned and imprisoned in Paris and, after incurring the immortal belated he no longer fancies, sent off to cultivate his garden.

Gold transposes narrative to dialogue efficiently enough, although sometimes at the cost of Voltaire's *faux-naïf* tone, and adds a few lines of his own. I don't recall a king saying he wanted to start a bloody war in the name of a city that would "probably be razed to the ground" or Candide telling Pangloss that "life has lost its colour — I swim in an eternal sea of beige". But then what's wrong with introducing the odd modern note into a piece that still has plenty of uprightness in a decade where corruption and callow optimism, pain, sorrow and human resilience continue to cohabit?

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Mars is the last, best hope for America.

Pathfinder proves the Red Planet is today's Wild West, says Tim Hames

Americans are extraordinary people. Few others would send a probe through 300 million miles of space primarily to discover themselves. Whatever the success or failure of the *Pathfinder* mission, NASA will be back. Although funding is much tighter than in the glory days of the 1960s, the widely predicted elimination of the US space programme has failed to materialise. Nor is there much chance that it will.

Meanwhile Russian efforts, symbolised by the embarrassing break-up of the Mir space station this week, continue to collapse. It is certainly true that the general future of space exploration depends upon co-operation between the two former superpower rivals. However, that point masks an important distinction. If the two nations do not collaborate, an American programme of some significance will continue, albeit in a curtailed form. The future for the Russian venture is far less certain.

The quest to explore space has a different and more powerful meaning for Americans. Spectacular scientific discoveries and raw commercial advantage are patently useful but not ultimately essential. The quest can be justified as an end in itself, even at times of tight budget constraints.

Not that NASA believes in taking any chances. The agency has long been among the most politically sophisticated pressure groups in Washington. The choice of *Pathfinder* for the Independence Day touch-down was more than a mere coincidence of the calendar. The announcement last summer that micro-fossils had been found in a meteorite, suspected to have originated on Mars, was also rather fortuitous in its timing. The rock itself had been in NASA's possession for a decade. The dramatic press statement came in the middle of the American political convention season. Politicians from all parties, confronted with a fascinated electorate, scrambled to pledge their support for further space exploration.

One year ago the blockbuster film *Independence Day* was released. Serious space types pretended to be horrified at the portrayal of aliens as aggressors. Secretly they were delighted at the publicity. When *Apollo 13* landed, American cinema a year earlier, NASA shamelessly promoted it. In return, the film's stars testified for the space programme in Congress. Even the 50th anniversary of the Roswell "UFO crash-landing" incident, while officially ridiculed, did not want for experts willing to discuss the circumstances under which other life forms might be identified. If the UFO phenomenon had not been invented by others, NASA would have found a method of its own.

Although the present probe was planned before last summer's sensational announcement, NASA has exploited the increased interest. The agency has stressed the "cheap and cheerful" nature of this mission. A trip to the American public at £90 million — rather less than the takings of *Independence Day* after its first two weeks at the box office. Another nine flights to the Red Planet are planned over the next eight years, culminating in a craft that will collect rocks from the surface and return them to Earth. The whole enterprise will cost less than a single *Apollo* expedition to the Moon.

This parsimony is prudent but not essential. When the Berlin Wall fell, NASA feared that its future would be caught in the rubble. The Cold War and the space race had

not merely occurred simultaneously but symbiotically. NASA was established by President Eisenhower after the shock of the first Sputnik satellite launch by the Soviet Union. President Kennedy's clarion call for a man to be placed on the Moon in the 1960s represented an almost desperate attempt to overtake the communists after Yuri Gagarin's flight caught the United States out again.

At the height of the space race in 1967, 4 per cent of the American gross domestic product was devoted to the *Apollo* programme, at a time of vast expenditure on Lyndon Johnson's social policies and on the intensifying war in Vietnam.

That the Warsaw Pact imploded at all appeared bad enough for NASA. That it did so in the late 1980s and early 1990s, when the agency was still reeling from the *Challenger* tragedy, the fiasco of the initially short-sighted Hubble telescope, and adverse publicity surrounding cost overruns and bureaucratic bangles, implied disaster. Worse still, the American budget deficit was soaring rapidly towards \$300 billion and cuts in space seemed a good deal more palatable than reductions in cherished programmes on Earth.

Despite all that, NASA has survived and prospered. Neither George Bush nor Bill Clinton could bring themselves to wield the knife. It will enter the next century retaining a significant budget and 17,000 employees. The life on Mars mystery has given the agency a new sense of purpose and public standing which, conveniently, can be pursued through relatively inexpensive unmanned exploration. This has, anyway, long been seen as more scientifically valuable by the professionals.

For in the end, space has been more than a Cold War tool for Americans. Its appeal reflects the sense of mission that is the nature of the nation itself. In that sense, it is more than appropriate that the Mars probe should land on Independence Day. The United States was built on the pioneer principle. In the 19th century, that meant the great drive westward in the quest for free land. When the country was finally fully settled, the promotion of American values across the planet became the fundamental crusade for this century.

While the communist threat existed, a consensus could be kept that overcame the isolationism of many Americans who had abandoned the old world for the new and did not expect to return to Europe's internal affairs. Now that worldwide Marxism has been crushed by worldwide markets, the same missionary zeal has proved harder to maintain.

While many American eyes are on Mars, in Madrid next week what is formally known as Nato expansion will prove the smokescreen for Nato's encirculation. Americans, a restless breed, will need a new challenge for the next century.

Space provides that focus and NASA need not fear for its future. In the space of 200 years, American energies will have shifted from Red Indians to the Red Army and now the Red Planet.

Means may alter but the ends remain the same. That is as true now as it was 221 years ago, when Thomas Jefferson issued the Declaration of Independence. John Kennedy once described the United States as "the last, best hope for mankind on Earth." That hope will continue to be placed and pursued in the heavens.

As the Home Secretary dithers over his successor, Woodrow Wyatt fears for the future of racing

Will Whitehall wreck the Tote?

The chairmanship of the Tote is of much importance to racing. The Tote Board has one objective: to maximise its profits, which it gives to racing. Now that Ladbrokes has joined Tote Direct, which we founded with Bass, the owners of Coral bookmakers, the profits to the Tote will mount considerably. Add to that the right we won to bet on the outcome of the Irish lottery and on anything that ordinary bookmakers can bet on, and within a few years the Tote's profits are set fair to be about £25 million a year.

For the year ending March 31, we made record profits. They would have been £1 million higher if Michael Howard had not refused us permission to bet on Irish lottery numbers until Christmas. We are grateful for the all-party support which forced this through. The Levy Board, under the wise guidance of Sir John Sparrow, competently distributes the hypothecated tax, or levy, on horserace betting. One day this may end, and the Tote's contribution to racing will be even more vital. When Lord Whitehall was Home Secretary we agreed not to let the Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, know about this hypothecated tax for fear she would blow it up.

Unfortunately, without telling us, the Home Office decided to

register the Tote as a Non-Departmental Public Body, making it unique on the 1,227-strong list of such bodies in that it has never had a penny from the Government; rather, it has paid large sums in betting duty and corporation tax. So Nolan rules had to be applied to finding my successor. Last July Michael Howard wrote to me, saying that he would be very happy to consider the claims of anyone who had my support, an undertaking which has since been discarded. He also said he wanted the new chairman to be on the board in early 1997, so that I could induct him into the business before my intended retirement on April 30. Since then I have been twice asked to accept an extension to my chairmanship, first until June 30 and now until July 31. I agreed because I could not leave the Tote rudderless with so many delicate commercial decisions to be taken.

Initially I was asked my views on the list of applicants for my job. I gave them, including advice to disregard a few, one of whom, I understand, was actually offered the chairmanship although the offer was subsequently withdrawn. I dare not say publicly which of the remaining candidates I think the most likely to be capable of carrying forward the highly successful policies of the board, lest he be disqualified. The Tote was a sham 20 years ago when I reluctantly took on the chairmanship on the insistence of Roy Jenkins, then Labour Home Secretary, because he knew I was interested in racing.

Today the Tote is very big business, with the fastest and most efficient tote (pari-mutuel) in the world. We have been forced to be, to parry intense competition from bookmakers who have stayed paramount in the

affections of punters since they first took bets at races started by Charles II at Newmarket. There is no comprehension at the Home Office, or among the panel which interviewed the applicants, of the nature of the Tote business. Mostly it was the blind interviewing the blind. Top marks seemed to go to applicants who criticised the board's policies without knowing what they were. The last Home Secretary to visit Wigan, the centre for controlling our operations, was Douglas Hurd, who opened - it there we have the largest credit betting operation in the world.

We have a remarkable team at the top, with John Heaton as chief executive and Tom Phillips as financial director. These two have laboured skilfully on the documentation for the Ladbrokes entry into Tote Direct. They will be at it again if Bass, our original partner in Tote Direct, succeeds in its offer to buy

William Hill. For the good of racing, I hope the bid will not be referred to the Monopolies Commission. But in some areas an aggregation of William Hill and Coral shops will create a monopoly, and our team will work on offers to buy shops which Coral has to dispose of. Yet, to the concern of Tote staff, John Heaton's contract runs out in November, awaiting the wishes of my successor.

I think it reasonable to say that, having brought the Tote from insolvency to a business worth £400 million, I am in a good position to know the qualities required by my successor. I have met Jack Straw officially only once. He was charming but curiously akin to Michael Howard in his addition to Douglas Jay's famous phrase, "the gentleman in Whitehall knows best". New Labour, like old Labour, worryingly thinks that it knows how to run businesses. I thought Margaret Thatcher had destroyed that delusion, but it appears not. It is difficult to build a thriving business. It is easy for a duff chairman to wreck it. I would hate to see agreeable Jack Straw look naive and glib in his selection of my successor.

Lord Wyatt has been chairman of the Horserace Totalisator Board since 1976.

Bonfire of brown envelopes

The overblown response to the Downey report tells us much about the vanity of the British political class



Neil Hamilton faces the music: a below-par example of the species *Homo politicus oleaginus*.

So what can be done about Neil Hamilton for bringing such shame on Parliament? His ostracism from Tattler Conservative Association is clearly not punishment enough. He has been disowned by his constituents. Nor is that considered sufficient. Yesterday's hysterical reaction to the Downey report on cash-for-questions suggests that more, much more is required. Mr Hamilton should be horsewhipped through Knutsford and slammed in Great Budworth stocks. He should be hauled to London and dragged around the bounds of Westminster in sackcloth and ashes.

Still not sufficient is the cry. Has not the mighty *Guardian* spoken? Has not the giant *Panorama* turned the thumb downwards? St Margaret's Westminster must hear a sermon of damnation delivered by the Archbishop of Canterbury. A hit squad of MPs, television interviewers and *Guardian* journalists must be sworn before the great Lord Nolan. Mr Hamilton must be stoned to death at the wall of the Jewel Tower and his body fed to dogs. Does the BBC newscast still foam at the mouth? Does the parliamentary lobby still writhe in indignation? Round up Mr Hamilton's goods and chattels and burn them. Sell his family into slavery. Scratch the miserable name of Hamilton from the record of history.

Of all the hypocritical deposits to fall from the rear end of the Palace of Westminster, few can equal this week's three-volume Downey report. I carry no torch for Mr Hamilton. He seems to be a below-par example of the species *Homo politicus oleaginus*. He stayed at the Paris Ritz (home-from-home for some Tory MPs) on someone else's expenses. He took money from political lobbyists to "put down questions". The answers to these questions, let alone their impact on public affairs, remain a mystery. All we know is that Mohamed Al Fayed ranted on Mr Hamilton, whom he had paid as a lobbyist, when the latter became a junior minister and refused to reopen an Industry Department inquiry into Mr Al Fayed's business dealings. Overnight Mr Al Fayed became the darling of investigative journalism and the champion of open government.

Newspapers are right to expose such goings-on. The *Guardian* clearly has a hotline to Mr Al Fayed's "little list" of Ritz guests and receivers of stuffed envelopes. This liaison of lewded propriety and Harrods flash, malice may seem strange, but journalism has always sipped with spoons of various lengths, some of them blessed by Yuri Geller. The hound-

ing of Mr Hamilton, Tim Smith, Jonathan Aitken and others is in the tradition of Trollope's Quintus Slide. The *Guardian* has taken up the old Sunday Times mantle of heavy-duty, heavy-cost investigative reporting. Since MPs are unwilling to regulate themselves, the press must guard the guardians.

Yet Mr Hamilton is not a serial killer, a child molester or a high-rolling fraudster. He has not blown taxpayers' millions on foreign dams, unusable weapons or job-creation schemes. He has been found guilty of no crime by a real court, any more than has Mr Aitken. These men have been declared by the press as dishonest and unfit to act as representatives in Parliament. In each case, their constituents have drawn the appropriate conclusion. Not one of those pursued by *The Guardian* survived the hustings. They brought their profession into disrepute and their profession has dealt with them in the most emphatic way. It has struck them off.

To call the cash-for-questions affair the most "shameful and grubby affair" in modern politics, as does *The Independent*, is ridiculous. The *Daily Telegraph* shakes with indignation at "ambition,

betrayal, backstabbing, lies". The *Times* thunders at this "damning judgment on the arrogance of power". The *Guardian* goes overboard with self-congratulation, treating the Downey report at the same length as it did Gordon Brown's Budget. Mr Hamilton was yesterday pictured nine times in that paper, which also pictured itself five times and its former Editor, Peter Preston, twice. Mr

Fayed clearly was, for Sir Gordon Downey to go to such lengths to prove that Mr Hamilton was a lobbyist's lackey is absurd. The *Guardian* had already shown that, and the electors of Tattler had agreed. The constituency's new MP, Martin Bell, not Sir Gordon, is the proof of that.

MPs have always put down questions for constituents, employers, lobbyists, friends, Uncle Tom Cobleigh and all. They are by their nature "vested interests".

I recall no outcry, no mind-numbing report, no Richard Branson's substantial accusations against British Airways for its Commons lobbying in the days of BA's then chairman, Lord King of Warminster. In the mid-1980s, many of the MPs who were defending BA's commercial interests were said to be receiving benefits worth thousands of pounds, with precious few declaring them. Lloyd's insurance market escaped regulation as a result of lobbying by MPs with Lloyd's interests — a rare instance of such pressure working.

Almost any MP will take money to push a cause. There is nothing wrong in that. Most who have other careers — which is a good thing — will push that interest shamelessly. When a banker MP

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opposes a monopoly reference, or a barrister MP opposes court aid for solicitors, or a doctor MP waves shrouds on behalf of the NHS, nobody believes that they are dispassionate. Farmer MPs are flagrant lobbyists for their financial interests. No lobbyist need pay them to "put down questions". A rumouring cheque from the Ministry of Agriculture works the necessary magic.

The principal charge against Messrs Hamilton and Smith is not that they took money but that they concealed the fact from colleagues. That is indeed unethical and now against the rules. But let us keep this in proportion.

Did anybody seriously believe that the Al Fayed "bad rank" MPs were asking questions about Mr Al Fayed out of the goodness of their hearts? Who was fooled, and to what public damage? You might as well ask whether a financial journalist who plugs a share, a fashion writer who plugs a dress, or a motoring columnist who plugs a car has never taken so much as a Savoy lunch for free. Journalists may not be "running the country", but nor was Mr Hamilton. We are fellow travellers along this ethical highway. We all sup at the same inn.

Only MPs and journalists besotted by the self-importance of the House of Commons could respond to the revelations about cash-for-questions with the portentousness shown this week. Parliament may be constitutionally important as the electoral college of the government of the day, its role in running the country, and therefore its value to the purveyors of corruption, is vastly overstated. The media loves Parliament because it is theatre. But that is form, not substance.

While journalists are poring over Ritz hotel bills, I have no doubt that far greater sins are lying dormant in the procurement departments of Whitehall and local government. Sir Gordon Downey himself was government auditor for six years in the 1980s. I cannot believe he never met anything as awful as Mr Hamilton's £25,000, to merit six months and 900 censorious pages. I wonder what horrors in local government and the NHS are daily ignored by the Audit Commission as being too tedious to investigate. Perhaps these guardians of public morality might now turn their gaze on defence purchasing, drugs licensing, government property disposal, privatisation consultancy.

Or perhaps not. They are boring subjects. The Hamilton affair is exhilarating because it concerns the self-esteem of the British political class. It has little to do with the better government of Britain.

Simon Jenkins

Hamilton may be a "serial liar". The *Guardian* is surely a serial gloster.

In the sledgehammer-anti-nut department, Sir Gordon Downey's 900 pages rants with the Scott report on arms-to-Iraq. The effort is wholly disproportionate to the public evil. Mr Hamilton and Mr Smith were backbenchers. Anyone who believes such men are "running the country" is naive, as Mr Al

Saving face

STEVEN SPIELBERG must be having second thoughts about coming to Britain to shoot his latest film, *Saving Private Ryan*, a war-time drama starring Tom Hanks.

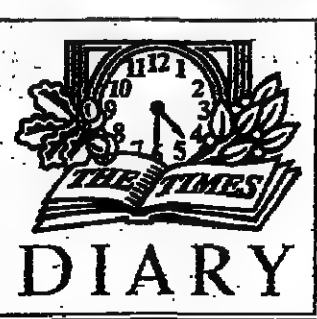
In Hertfordshire, where workers are building a French town for the film, Spielberg is having to deal

with a truculent BECTU, the Broadcasting Entertainment Cinema and Theatre Union. Meanwhile in Ireland, two of his extras drafted in from the Irish Army reservists landed in hospital this week.

The pair were hurried to Wexford General Hospital the other day suffering from hypothermia after spending most of the day in the Irish Sea. Their condition was precipitated when it was instructed that their wet suits be made smaller after they became visible under the extra costumes.

BECTU is complaining that Spielberg's company is underpaying workers building the replica French town, and that the company is refusing to hold pay negotiations. The union is now holding a ballot on whether to strike.

Spielberg must be wishing they showed more of the *sang froid* of the Irish. "Our two chaps were in and out of the ocean all day," said Commandant Declan Carbury, the Reserves' press officer. "They're back at work already."



Comforting news for the many anarchic Tories feeling left out by the rise of Hague, the management consultant. They could soon have their own magazine. Hywel Williams, John Redwood's former henchman, is putting out feelers about setting up a new magazine along the lines of the *National Review* run by William F. Buckley in America. All those who deserted from Redwood to Hague in the last round of the Tory leadership election should beware.

Heil Neil
AS a young Tory, Neil Hamilton, the former MP for Tattler, displayed a provocative interest in the

politically outré by accepting the hospitality of the Italian MSI party, which boasted a Mussolini or two in its ranks. In the evidence he gave to Sir Gordon Downey, whose report came out on Thursday, he showed that his interest in the great dictators has not waned.

On page 183, paragraph 36 of the report, he attacks Mohamed Al Fayed, accusing him of the tactical use of the big lie. "Hitler explained the psychology of this with compelling clarity in *Mein Kampf*", Hamilton told Downey, before launching into an extended quote from the Führer's work: "In the big lie there is always a certain force of credibility: the broad masses of a nation... more readily fall victims to the big lie than the small lie, since they themselves often tell small lies in little matters, but would be ashamed to resort to large-scale falsehoods."

He ends his quote from Hitler: "The grossly impudent lie always leaves traces, even after it has been nailed down."

Capital move
BREAKING with her family's musical tradition is Imogen Lloyd

Webber, the daughter of Lord Lloyd-Webber, who has just started life as a journalist. She is working on the Londoner's Diary, the gossip column in the London Evening Standard.

She has been there for two weeks now, and by all accounts is proving rather good and unassuming about using her father's high-level contacts book. When approached about his new recruit yesterday, however, the Londoner was terse:



Gossip: Imogen Lloyd Webber

"We're terribly sorry. Imogen is far too busy to talk to you."

Incessant rain was the just one of the problems facing Sir Geoffrey Cass, the president of the Lawn Tennis Association, at Wimbledon this week. As he pondered the scheduling hell, the exit of Henman and the possibility of his tournament heading into a third week, it was the last thing he needed to climb into his car and reverse it straight into the car belonging to his friend, the former LTA president John Robbins.

New leaf

EXPECT no more than a faint tremble of the upper lip next month when Geoffrey Bailey resigns his post as keeper of the Royal Family's book accounts after 35 years of service. Bailey, who worked for 23 years at Hatchards in Piccadilly before moving to Waterstones in Harrods, is moving to Bedford Street in Covent Garden where he will run Crime in Store, a new bookshop owned by a syndicate of crime novelists led by Frances Fyfield, Colin Dexter and Mitzi Walters.



Resigning: Geoffrey Bailey

"I want to get back to grassroots book-selling," says Bailey from his familiar position, patrolling the Harrods shop floor. "I've worn a suit for 35 years and can't wait to wear slacks and a jacket to work." An expert on European royalty, Bailey will not be taking the royal accounts with him. The new owner is very heavy on detective fiction.



"You've got an advanced case of brassneck, Mr Hamilton"



THE ERMINE AND THE FOX

Conservatives must beware positions that tie them to the past

For supporters of the Conservative Party these are difficult days. The study of recent history is lowering: the study of the present, for all their desire that the country should prosper, is frustrating. As for the future, they can draw hope only from the resilience and adaptability of their party's best days. At the end of a week in which a Labour Chancellor has enjoyed the praise from business that Tories had long given up hoping for, the Conservative Party should look back to other occasions when it mounted a recovery.

Exactly one hundred years ago the towering figure of 20th-century Conservatism, Winston Churchill, made his first foray into politics. The occasion is marked on Monday with a lunch at Claverton Manor near Bath, where Churchill first spoke in public and which is home, appropriately given his background and views, to the American Museum in Britain. In 1897 the Tory party was in power and the Empire at its zenith. Churchill was at pains, however, to remind his audience of the difficulties both had endured.

Just as Tories now look back 18 years and wonder how a party that has achieved so much can be thought so little of, Churchill took his listeners back a similar span to consider the vagaries of political fortune. "In 1880," he explained, "the Tory party was crushed, broken and disheartened, its principles were unpopular, its numbers were few and it appeared to be on the verge of extinction." And yet it recovered.

Churchill gave credit for the "revolution in public opinion" which saw the Tories recover to their instinct for liberty, a revived ability to appeal to every class and an overhauled organisation which, through the Primrose League, turned the party into a mass movement. He recognised above all, however, the importance of taking the fight to the opponent. The Tories today, in contrast, seem still to believe that Labour will do their work for them. Having grown used to a Labour Party with policies which offended common sense the Tories became, and remain, complacent. The Tories expected Labour to fumble in the long run-up to this year's election campaign, to crack during it, to demonstrate their inexperience

early in office and to bring in a budget which would end their honeymoon with the voters. But this Government does not lead with its chin. It has the sense of direction necessary to anticipate, and overcome, "events".

The Tories still appear to feel that they were the victims of "events", from the ERM collapse to the Hamilton debacle, which fell like thunderbolts from a cloudless sky. They were, however, culpable because they failed to make the change.

From management of the currency to management of the party, the Tory leadership failed to foresee the eminently foreseeable and forfeited its right to govern. The Tories could find themselves, like Labour in the Fifties, having won the argument, their heirs occupying the commanding heights of the academy, but out of power unless they make themselves modern. If the Tories become identified in the public mind as the party of the fatcat, foxhunter and fifth Viscount Ffrenchingham they will find their support restricted to the Cayman Islands, the Quorn and Debreit's.

The Conservative Party exists to defend capitalism, the free man's exercise of traditional liberties and a balanced constitution; but it must not allow the nature of its defence to be defined by its enemies. In opposing Labour's plans for the Lords the Tories must follow the thinking of writers such as Ferdinand Mount. They must propose their own reforms to give the second chamber new authority to revise without it becoming a rival to the Commons. Wrapping themselves in ermine will not suffice.

Labour is advancing on a broad front. But weaknesses will inevitably appear. Labour's willingness to ride the tide of European integration will make it difficult to meet the competitive challenge from the East. Labour may will the right end in education and welfare, but it still finds uncongenial the market means which are the best guarantee of success. If the Tories can develop a convincing critique, a set of policies which speak to a new, more liberal generation and a modern rhetorical case for Britain as a global trading nation as powerful as the old imperial message of the Primrose League, then they may find that the Churchills of the next century emerge in their ranks.

LADY C'S HUSBAND

Marriage to Sir Terence has not been so soufflé

A pinch of spice livened up Britain's breakfast tables yesterday as the story of the cook, the designer, his wife and his lovers, the divorcee, the *Joan's* feeding classes. The divorcee of Sir Terence and Lady Conran, illustrated by pictures of them standing in their immaculate kitchen under hanging saucers and dried herbs, has been almost too tasty to be true.

All the ingredients of a Jilly Cooper novel were there: the man-of-affairs, a pair of old-school ties, houses in Belgravia and France, an admiring judge and, threading through the story, a journey from flatpack furniture to stylish sofa. The couple who began life bohemian but poor ended with glamour, huge riches and fame. But the man who had made such a success of his life suffered repeated failure at his marital core.

Lady Conran did at least tolerate what Mr Justice Wilson called Sir Terence's "healthy ego" for 33 years. She bore him three children and helped him to build up Habitat while, because of the pressures of Sir Terence's work, "the parental role was cast with unusual weight on the wife's shoulders". As a recognition for what the judge called her "outstanding contribution" to the marriage and the business, he awarded her a settlement of £10.5 million, about an eighth of Sir Terence's fortune.

Mr Justice Wilson has made a point of

upholding women's legal rights. In this case, Lady Conran found her champion. She was, according to the judge, "beautiful, creative and instinctively stylish". Sir Terence, meanwhile, received a withering rebuke: "It can be difficult for a man with a healthy ego who has achieved a veritable success to look down and discern a contribution other than his own."

The judge's strictures made not a dent on this unassailable ego. Sir Terence immediately dismissed any suggestion that his former wife had helped him: "The figure is unbelievable just because she cooked a few meals now and again and wrote a few books." The woman who wrote "a few books" was actually one of the most influential food journalists in Britain. But Sir Terence could not resist adding a dash of bitterness to the judge's sweet words. "I taught her how to cook," he insisted. If a Le Creuset frying pan had ever flown his way, it would hardly be surprising.

In a marriage to a man as driven as Sir Terence, there is not room for two career-maximisers. Men who work that hard and devote so little time to their home and family demand a spouse who is there to do all the chores. This task, however, is not trivial. It deserves reward. An eighth of Sir Terence's riches seems a small price to pay for 33 years of cooking, caring and ego-stroking.

LITERARY GOLDMINE MYSTERY

'Elementary', said the hero to his obtuse companion

"Hand me *Bradshaw's*, Watson" cried the great detective. "I have no doubt that your invaluable railway guide will inform us how to travel to Crowborough, even though it ceased publication a century before Connex assumed the management of the lines to the South Coast. For we have no time to lose."

This was the blustery first Saturday of an unseasonably wet July. Sherlock Holmes and our humble lodgings at 221B Baker Street were unchanged, frozen in time around 1895. But seldom had I observed a more intense look of concentration on my old friend's face as he pored over the well-thumbed volume. It had been the starting point for the cases which have given Holmes an uncanny life that persists beyond the page. "I shall accompany you, of course," said I. "But what takes us with such desperate urgency to Crowborough? Great Heavens, Holmes! You do not mean that there has been a reappearance of the Sussex Vampire, 100 years after its first appearance?"

"That thought had crossed my mind, but I soon dismissed it," replied Holmes with a complacent smile. "For why should a case of apparent vampirism attract thousands of visitors from as far away as Japan and California to a quiet hilltop town on the Sussex Weald, notable only for its Barratt houses? You need not trouble yourself to look in your notes. I have been through all the intellectual pilgrimages that have taken us to Sussex. From *The Valley of Fear* to Black Peter, who was found impaled on a wall by a harpoon in a cabin in the garden of

his retirement home near Crowborough. But I find no explanation for this sudden mass migration there of Holmesians."

"Have we finally met our Dunkirk?" I cried. "How often have I said to you that when you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however absurd, must be the truth?" exclaimed Holmes, impatiently. "Think Watson. What does Crowborough mean to you?" "Sir Arthur," I replied, after long deliberation. "Precisely," cried Holmes. "Sir Arthur Conan Doyle spent the last 23 years of his life at Crowborough, protesting excessively at being known only as the creator of my little adventures which you have written up with such flattering admiration."

"Other places reap the benefits from our immortal history of brilliant detective with an obtuse sidekick," he continued. "Baker Street is awash with Mrs Hudson's tea-room and emporia for Moriarty memorabilia. The Swiss Tourist Board arranges lucrative tours in fancy dress to the Reichenbach Falls. So now Crowborough has decided to join the party. It is holding the first Sherlock Holmes world festival. There are to be Hound of the Baskervilles dog shows and a Sherlock Holmes vintage from the local vineyard. The only mystery is why Crowborough has not thought of such a profitable scheme before. Now, Watson, tourism is your department. Summon a hansom cab. We cannot let literary truth steal the thunder of our long romance."

"Wonderful," I ejaculated. "Elementary," said he again, in his authentic catchphrase.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Howard and the Amsterdam treaty

From Sir Christopher Chataway

Sir, Why does Michael Howard ("We demand a voice on Amsterdam", July 1) tolerate our continuing membership of the EU? Among the horrors of the Amsterdam treaty, he explains, is a provision enabling members to suspend the rights of an EU state found guilty of seriously and persistently breaching "the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law".

To some of us, foolish and trusting souls, this seemed quite a good idea. But we were obviously duped. These foreigners clearly will stop at nothing. Why does Mr Howard want to be in any club with them? Or does he?

Yours faithfully,
CHRISTOPHER CHATAWAY,
The Garrick Club,
Garrick Street, WC2.

From the Director of the European Movement - United Kingdom

Sir, Michael Howard builds up the Amsterdam treaty as a great threat to Britain to justify the need for a referendum in a way that rewrites the Conservative Party's own credible track record with the Single European Act and Maastricht treaty, and distorts the facts about the Treaty of Amsterdam.

Qualified majority voting has been extended in a few modest ways in the new treaty, but nothing like as extensively as those agreed by Margaret Thatcher in the Single European Act. The powers of the European Parliament have indeed been increased, but not at the expense of Westminster.

The European Parliament's powers are designed to hold the Commission to account more effectively and to balance the Council of Ministers by providing more detailed legislative and democratic scrutiny. This is again not a new idea. Such reforms featured prominently in both the Single European Act and the Maastricht treaty.

Mr Howard argues that "it does not take much imagination" to see how the suspension of voting rights on the grounds of human rights violations can be invoked to avoid national vetoes. Actually it takes an extraordinary leap of imagination, fuelled by the worst kind of paranoia. This clause is only intended for a case where a future new member state from Central or Eastern Europe were to revert to undemocratic measures. All current member states veto proposals from time to time. The idea that they would use this clause to avoid the veto of one amongst them is fanciful in the extreme.

A referendum would of course be useful as a way of clearing the air about the European issue and getting some real facts into the debate. After all, a vote for or against the Amsterdam treaty would be a vote for or against our continued membership of the EU. There would no doubt be an overwhelming majority in favour.

Yours faithfully,
STEPHEN WOODARD,
Director, European Movement - United Kingdom,
Dean Bradley House,
52 Horseferry Road, SW1,
July 1.

From Lord Taverne, QC

Sir, Michael Howard makes the extraordinary suggestion that our EU partners might circumvent our use of the veto by somehow treating differences over anti-terrorist or immigration legislation as an abuse of human rights.

The EU's effective functioning depends not only on a sensible and reasonable interpretation of the provisions of the treaties, but on a relationship of mutual trust and co-operation. If Mr Howard really believes that our partners might act in the way he suggests, he must also believe that we should not be in the EU at all.

Yours faithfully,
DICK TAVERNE,
House of Lords,
July 2.

From Mr P. N. Beukers

Sir, Michael Howard's opinions seem to be more like Sir James Goldsmith than Sir James Goldsmith himself. What a great pity Mr Howard's party and his Prime Minister did not express the selfsame opinions before the general election.

Yours faithfully,
P. N. BEUKERS,
Meadowdale,
9 Correnden Road, Tonbridge, Kent,
July 1.

Helping hands

From the Reverend Jonathan Smith

Sir, Just the reading of Jan Herbert's multifarious *hostess duties* as the wife of a bishop (letter, July 4) induces a state of exhaustion. I offer this advice, which has always served me well: invite to your home only those whose company invigorates and refreshes you, and extend the fellowship to the kitchen afterwards.

Yours faithfully,
JONATHAN SMITH,
The Vicarage, 5 St John's Road,
Harpenden, Hertfordshire,
July 4.

Motivation behind Orange marches

From Lord Kilbracken

Sir, Professor Mike Brogan writes from Queen's University, Belfast (July 3; see also letter, July 4), that Orange marches are intended to drive home the point that "northern Catholics... are intruders into the 'normal' society, and should pack their bags and return to some spurious homeland".

He is mistaken. The Orangemen know well that it is they who came as intruders and that Northern Ireland was the far from spurious homeland of the nationalists.

The purpose of their marches is to emphasise and reassert the position of dominance and privilege enjoyed by the intruders ever since, and to express their demand that it will continue.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN KILBRACKEN,
House of Lords,
July 3.

From Professor Emeritus G. J. Hand

Sir, I have read with much sympathy the letter of Professor Mike Brogan. (I am an ancestral Roman Catholic with significant Anglican and Presbyterian elements).

But, distasteful though such a view must be in the context of the clearly provocative actions of the Orange Lodges, it is difficult to avoid the reasoning of O'Brien, J., in *R v Justices of Londonderry* (1891) 28 LR 1r 440, at 450:

If danger arises from the exercise of lawful rights resulting in a breach of the peace, the remedy is the presence of sufficient force to

prevent that result, not the legal condemnation of those who exercise those rights.

Yours sincerely,
GEOFFREY HAND
(Professor of Jurisprudence,
University of Birmingham, 1980-92),
Carnlough,
72 Granfield,
Rochestown Avenue, Dun Laoghaire,
July 3.

From Mr J. S. Anderson

Sir, Professor Brogan is wrong in his analysis of the Orangemen's motivations. Far from being an oppressive demonstration of superiority the Orange marches are a defensive statement of a determination to resist oppression.

The Republic of Ireland remains a Roman Catholic theocratic state, and it has a constitutional obligation to annex the (non-Catholic) Orangemen. Such a proposition is abhorrent to non-Catholics, whether or not they belong to the Orange Order, and it is this aggressive Catholic stance that remains the primary obstacle to peace.

Professor Brogan fails to mention the equally unsatisfactory Green marches that accompany the Catholic intent to annex. In essence, his simplistic public order attitude is a non-starter.

Solutions lie in Dublin, and not in Belfast.

Yours sincerely,
J. S. ANDERSON,
Blue Slates Farm,
Leyland Lane, Ulms Walton,
Leyland, Lancashire,
July 3.

Remembering BA's golden past

From Mr Bernard Kilroy

Sir, Both sides in the BA dispute are being accused of "travelling back in time" in their industrial relations (leading article, "Air turbulence", July 2). In fact, only ten years ago BA was upheld as a model organisational culture which those of us involved in MBA tutoring have used for many years. It is the decline from that situation which is the tragedy.

The customer satisfaction which made BA the "world's favourite airline" was the result of an intensive company-wide programme for "re-educating staff to use their judgment and initiative and by redefining professionalism", to quote from an internal report from the 1980s. Previously, there had been "a classic vicious circle": frustrated by management procedures, staff had been making unrealistic demands on themselves in an effort to please. This created "the expectation of failure and dissatisfaction which became self-reinforcing".

Now the wheel has turned full circle. In 1997, staff are being asked to put customer satisfaction first but are being disempowered. A culture in which employees were once treated as partners is being replaced by one in which they are clearly subordinates, even threatened with legal action. "Putting people first" had depended on a psychological contract of mutual respect inside the company, repeated at all levels, and the prerequisite for consideration towards passengers.

All of us are stakeholders in BA — as a nation or as individuals working for any organisation. As an exemplary employer it has been an inspiration, with a transforming leadership, beloved by the media and a case study

for business schools. As such, BA has been a national ethical asset. Its reputation will now have a polluting effect on the business environment.

Yours faithfully,
BERNARD KILROY,
10 Hunts Common,
Hartley Wintney, Hampshire.

From Mr Stephen Charles

Sir, Your first leader today says that "before privatisation BA was an industrial museum of antiquated working practices".

I am a retired pilot with BOAC and BA, and am proud to have spent my working life with the nation's airline at that time. We had a dual role — to build a great British airline and to introduce into service a succession of great British aircraft — the Britannia, the Comet, the VC10, the Viscount and others.

Management and staff were represented on a joint council which met regularly to sort out differences and to discuss future plans — there were disputes but they seldom if ever resulted in "industrial action". When the airline was prepared for privatisation, prospective investors (including employees) queued up to buy shares.

What a sad contrast with the position today, when 72 per cent of ground and cabin employees (no longer "staff") are obviously completely disenchanted with their managers.

Sincerely,
STEPHEN CHARLES
(Senior Captain First Class,
British Airways, 1968-75),
Long Fen, Church Street,
Great Maplestead, Halstead, Essex,
July 2.

Lindisfarne Gospels

From Sir John Cotterell

Sir, I write in support of those who wish the Lindisfarne Gospels to be returned to the North East (report and leading article, July 3).

Thanks to the generosity of J. Paul Getty and the National Heritage Memorial Fund, the Mappa Mundi and the Chained Library will remain in Hereford, which is where they belong. They are housed in a magnificent new library and are a great asset to the city and have given a much needed boost to the local economy.

We were very grateful for the help and advice we received from the British Library during the construction of the library but its suggestion that as a national treasure the Lindisfarne Gospels can only be appropriately housed in London is nonsense. It is, after all, the British Library not the London Library.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN COTTERELL
(Chairman,
Hereford Mappa Mundi Trust),
Estate Office,
Garnons, Hereford,
July 3.

From Lady Laws

Sir, It may be of some comfort to record that since 1956 there has been a facsimile copy of the Gospels in the parish church of Holy Island, the gift of Rockford College, Illinois, to the people of Lindisfarne. Rockford College also, in 1984, founded Regent's College in London, and I have the pleasure of regularly taking students from that college to see both the Gospels in the British Library and their facsimile at the place where those Gospels were produced.

Yours faithfully,
SOPHIE LAWS
(Head of the Department of History,
Philosophy and Religion),
Regent's College, NW1,
July 3.

Lawyers' watchdogs

From the Chairman of the Compliance and Supervision Committee, Office for the Supervision of Solicitors

Sir, Mr A. G. Haynes (letter, June 30) writes that he is dissatisfied by our treatment of his complaint against the executor — a solicitor — of a will under which he was a beneficiary. Mr Haynes's complaint could not be dealt with because it was one of professional negligence — an area for the courts, and one which this office has no power to investigate. This point was explained to Mr Haynes, and the solicitors involved have quite correctly referred the matter to their professional indemnity insurers.

Mr Haynes criticises the OSS for a lack of lay representation. We have an adjudication committee, including a substantial number of lay members who play a vital role in representing the public interest. When the OSS was established last September, the Council of the Law Society publicly guaranteed its independence in decision-making.

Since then we have adopted a more open approach to the appointment of new lay members, including the use of advertisements in national papers. Those chosen from a large number of applicants will shortly be announced by the Master of the Rolls.

Yours faithfully,
PAUL PHAROAH,
Chairman, Compliance and Supervision Committee,
Office for the Supervision of Solicitors,
Victoria Court, 8 Dorset Place,
Leamington Spa, Warwickshire,
July 1.

Letters that are intended for publication should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

Further to your further letters...

From Mr Nicholas D. W. Thomas

Sir, When you published a letter from me in 1987 on the subject of aunts I, unlike Mr Adrian Taylor (letter, June 2; see also letters, July 2), received no written responses. However, a then casual acquaintance read the letter in Kathmandu a day or so later and, as a result, subsequently became my wife.

Yours faithfully,
NICHOLAS D. W. THOMAS,
42 Church Road,
Bebington, Wirral,
July 2.

From the Honourable Julian Guest

Sir, Your correspondents today are lucky: the only response I ever got to a letter published in *The Times* was a telephone call from my Mother informing me that I had entirely spoiled her breakfast.

Yours faithfully,
JULIAN GUEST,
West Grindon House,
Northam, Berwick-upon-Tweed,
July 2.

From Mr Peter Ryder

Sir, I wrote to you (using my business letterhead) last year suggesting that the Inland Revenue might have an ulterior motive with the introduction of tax self-assessment.

Within 48 hours of publication I received a notice telling me that a PAYE inspector would be visiting in a few days to inspect the payroll and PAYE records of the firm.

During the visit I asked whether it had anything to do with my letter. It hadn't, of course. Fortunately my PAYE records were accurate.

Yours sincerely,
PETER RYDER,
Tor Vein,
Kenwyn Road, Truro, Cornwall.
thrall.ryder@btinternet.com

From Professor Emeritus Felix Weinberg, FRS

Sir, Whenever I have had a letter published in *The Times*, I have received a few aberrant responses penned in mauve or green ink. Ordinarily I never see coloured ink. Could there be a correlation between rationality and ink colour — a research topic for psychologists — or even a diagnostic tool?

Yours faithfully,
FELIX WEINBERG,
59 Vicarage Road, SW14.

From Mr Brian Somers

Sir, My letter about the Draft Dome of Greenwich and associated millennial follies produced a few letters of support from kindly and well-intentioned people, and rather more colourful and uninhibited communications from people plainly in need of psychiatric help, every one of whom obviously saw me as the perfect standard-bearer for his or her crusade.

Yours &c,
BRIAN SOMERS,
30 Lutterworth Road, Sunderland.

From Mrs Jacqueline Worthington

Sir, After you published a missive of mine in August 1994, which described how a ladybird had eaten a crumb of gingerbread and drunk a drop of tea off my plate, I was inundated with letters from all over the world, including one from a Belgian gentleman with a poem he had written to celebrate the ladybird's teatime visit.

Incidentally, I have since discovered that ladybirds are very fond of shortcake and chocolate biscuits as well as gingerbread.

Yours faithfully,
JACQUELINE WORTHINGTON,
27 St John's Road, Stansted, Essex.

From Professor Irving Benjamin

Sir, Last year I wrote a letter about church music. My cousin in Israel, with whom I had not been in touch for 41 years, read *The Times* that day because she could not get her usual daily paper, recognised my name and wrote to me. We then kept in contact by e-mail, and I have since been reunited, not only with her, but with two cousins in Australia and one in London.

Yours sincerely,
IRVING BENJAMIN,
10 Denmark Road, W13.
i.benjamin@kcl.ac.uk
July 2.

From Mr Tom Hewitt

Sir, You have been kind enough to publish several letters of mine down the years. Publication has invariably prompted a mixed postbag. But my most interesting response was a begging letter from a man signing himself Mahmood at an address in Marrakesh. I sent him a copy of the letters page from *The Daily Telegraph* by return.

Yours sincerely,
T. W. HEWITT,
57 Albert Road, Epsom, Surrey.

From Mr V. E. Scottpadgett Truss

Sir, My own experience is that every letter that I have written to *The Times* has prompted a response. Unfortunately in my case it has always been in the form of a small note of rejection.

Yours faithfully,
VICTOR SCOTTPADGETT TRUSS,
3b Sandpit Lane, Braintree, Essex,
July 2.

COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
July 3: The Duke of Edinburgh, Colonel, this afternoon and evening visited the 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards at Ballykintyre, Northern Ireland.

His Royal Highness was received on arrival at Royal Air Force Aldergrove by Mr Adam Ingram MP (Minister of State for Northern Ireland).

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
July 4: The Duke of Edinburgh, Colonel, this morning continued a visit to the 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards at Ballykintyre, Northern Ireland.

His Royal Highness, Colonel-in-Chief, Army Cadet Force, this afternoon visited the Combined Cadet Force Central Camp at Culterragh, Perthshire, and was received by Mr Michael L. Kennedy, Lord-Lieutenant of Perth and Kinross (Sir David Montgomery, Bt).

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
July 4: The Princess Royal, Patron, the National Autistic Society, this morning opened the Wessex Autistic Society's Housing Development at 13-15 Barnes Lane, Bournemouth, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Dorset (the Lord Digby).

Her Royal Highness, Patron, the Home Farm Trust, this afternoon visited the Riverdell Scheme at Chudleigh, Newton Abbot, and

was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Devon (the Lord-Lieutenant of Devon).

The Princess Royal, President, the Rural Housing Trust, later visited Vicarage Court and opened the John Arlott Playgroup, Timberscombe, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Somerset (Colonel Sir John Wills, Bt).

ST JAMES'S PALACE
July 4: The Prince of Wales this morning arrived at Heathrow Airport, London, from the Philippines.

Mr Stephen Lamport, Lieutenant-Commander John Lavery RN and Miss Sandy Henny were in attendance.

KENSINGTON PALACE
July 4: The Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon was present this afternoon at a Garden Party given by the Royal Society of Medicine, College, Strawberry Hill, Twickenham, Middlesex, for teachers from the Commonwealth, the United States of America and Europe.

YORK HOUSE
ST JAMES'S PALACE
July 4: The Duke of Kent, President, the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club, this afternoon attended the Wimbledon Championships, London SW19.

Royal engagements

TODAY:
The Duke of York, Colonel-in-Chief, will visit the 3rd (Volunteer) Battalion, The Staffordshire Regiment, (The Prince of Wales) at Castle Martin Training Centre, Dyfed, at 11.00.

The Duke and Duchess of Kent will attend the ladies' finals of the Wimbledon Championships at 12.30.

TOMORROW:
The Duke of Kent will attend the men's finals of the Wimbledon Championships at 12.30 and the Duchess of Kent will attend at 1.30. Princess Alexandra will attend the men's finals at 12.30.

Royal Automobile Club
Prince Michael of Kent, President of the Royal Automobile Club, read the lesson at a service of thanksgiving held on July 2, in Westminster Abbey, to mark the centenary of the organisation. The Dean of Westminster officiated. Mr Jeffrey Rose, Chairman, Mr Ian Nicholls, patron of the year, and staff member Mrs Regina Wojcikowska gave readings. Canon Roger Royle preached the sermon.

A specially commissioned fanfare 'The Knights of the Round Table' was played by the Band of the Parachute Regiment, conducted by Captain Ian McMillan, after the service. Over 1,200 past and present staff attended the service.

Godfrey B.W. Kent

A Service of Thanksgiving for the life of Godfrey Blagdon Westcott Kent, TD, will be held in St Nicholas's Church, Harpenden, Hertfordshire, on Friday, July 11, 1997, at 3.00pm.

Luncheons

Manchester Consular Association
The Lord-Lieutenant of Greater Manchester and Mrs Timmins were received by Consul Robert Burnett-Hughes, president, and Mrs Burnett-Hughes at the annual summer luncheon of the Manchester Consular Association held yesterday at the Bridge Hotel, Prestbury.

FRUITERS' COMPANY
Mr Derek Tully, Master of the Fruiters' Company, accompanied by members of the livery and their ladies, was the host at a luncheon held yesterday at the Inverbridge George Museum after the summer luncheon of the Manchester Consular Association held yesterday at the Bridge Hotel, Prestbury.

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Weekend birthdays



Dave Allen, the comedian, will be 61 tomorrow; Geraldine James, the actress, will be 47



TODAY:
Sir Anthony Balfour, former chairman, Board of Inland Revenue, 60; Mrs Justice Bracken, 63; Mr Mark Cox, tennis player, 54; Sir Douglas Dods-Parker, former MP, 88; Mrs Elizabeth Emanuel, fashion designer, 44; Mr P.M. Fraenkel, civil engineer, 82; Sir Anthony Goodenough, diplomat, 56; Sir Michael Hamilton, former MP, 79; Mr Philip Madoc, actor, 63; Professor Sir James Mirrlees, political economist, Cambridge University, 61; Major-General Sir Jeremy Moore, 69; Sir Ian Prosser, chairman and chief executive, Bass, 54; Sir Simon Stewart, clinical oncologist, 42; Mr P.C. Tudball, former chairman, Baltic Exchange, 64; Sir John Ure, diplomat, 66; Mr John Wright, cricketer, 43.

TOMORROW:
Mr Vladimir Ashkenazy, pianist and conductor, 60; Surgeon Vice-Admiral Sir Dick Caldwell, 90; Mr David Capel, cricketer, 34; Professor G.R. Conway, Vice-Chancellor, Sussex University, 59; Baroness Cox, 68; the Duke of Devon, 68; Professor A.G. Dickens, FBA, historian, 87; Mr Peter Glossop, 76; Miss Mary Peters, athlete, 58.

ANNIVERSARIES
Baroness, 69; Sir Timothy Harford, former chairman, Kwik Save Group, 65; Mr Michael Harner, consulting surgeon, 85; Mr Jeff King, racehorse trainer, 56; Mr William McCall, trade unionist, 68; Mr John Makepeace, designer and furniture maker, 58; Professor G. the Duke of Devon, 68; Professor A.G. Dickens, FBA, historian, 87; Mr Peter Glossop, 76; Miss Mary Peters, athlete, 58.

TODAY
BIRTHS: Sarah Siddons, actress, 1753; George Borrow, writer, East Dereham, Norfolk, 1803; Princess Barmen, showman, Bethel, Connecticut, 1810; William Thomas Stead, journalist, Embleton, Northumberland, 1849; Cecil Rhodes, financier and politician, Bishop's Cleeve, Herefordshire, 1853; Wanda Landowska, harpsichordist, Warsaw, 1877; Dwight Davis, politician and tennis player, author of the Davis Cup, St Louis, Missouri, 1878; Jean Cocteau, poet, novelist, director and artist, Maisons-Laffitte, France, 1889; Georges Pompidou, President of France 1969-74, Montboudif, Aveyron, 1911.

DEATHS: Dorothy Jordan, actress, mistress of the Duke of Clarence (King William IV), St Cloud, France, 1816; Sir Stamford Raffles, founder of Singapore, London, 1826; Joseph Nipote, pioneer of photography, Paris, 1833; John Curran, Prime Minister of Australia 1941-45, Canberra, 1945; Wilhelm Backhaus, pianist, Villach, Austria, 1969; Thomas Mboya, statesman, assassinated, Nairobi, 1969; Walter Gropius, architect, New York, 1969; Georgije Heyer, novelist, 1974.

George Hammond was appointed the first British Ambassador to the US, 1791.

The first gold sovereigns were issued in Britain, 1841.

Thomas Cook was founded, 1841.

The Rolling Stones gave a free concert at Hyde Park, 1969.

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Memorial service

The Hon George Leslie Melville A service of thanksgiving for the life of the Hon George David Leslie Melville was held yesterday at Kincardine O'Neil Parish Church. The Rev James Anderson officiated. The Rev Ross Roydon of the Scottish Episcopal Church, and Mr Charles Savory and Miss Amelia Savory, grandchildren, said prayers. The Vicar of Arbutnot, KT, gave an address.

Dinner

London Criminal Courts Solicitors' Association
The Lord Chief Justice was the principal guest and speaker at the annual dinner of the London Criminal Courts Solicitors' Association held last night at Grosvenor House, Mr Robert Pascoe, president, was in the chair.

Saddlers' Company

The following have been elected officers of the Saddlers' Company for the ensuing year:
Master, Mr E.J. Pearson; Key-Warden, Mr D.S. Snowden; Quarter-Warden, Mr M.R. Quirk; Renter-Warden, Mr M.F.S. Bullen.

Stationers and Newspaper Makers

The following have been elected officers of the Company of Stationers and Newspaper Makers for the ensuing year:
Master, Mr Alderman and Sheriff of London, Upper Warden, Mr Vernon Sullivan; Lower Warden, Mr Richard Harrison.

Church news

Westminster Abbey
The Reverend Michael John Middleton, Archdeacon of Westminster, was appointed to the Residuary Canonry in Westminster Abbey vacant on the resignation of Canon Colin Semper on June 30.

Church in Wales

Dioecesis of Monmouth
The Rev Paul Vann, Vicar of Llanrumney, has been instituted as Vicar of Machyn.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr A.F.C. Darwall and Miss D.M. McWaters
The engagement is announced between Alexander, younger son of Captain and Mrs F.C. Darwall, of Ickford, Buckinghamshire, and Diana, younger daughter of the late Mr Michael McWaters, of Tisbury, Gloucestershire.

Mr J.S. Davidson and Miss V. King
The engagement is announced between John Davidson, of Baywater, London, and Victoria, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Christopher King, of Tisbury, Gloucestershire.

Mr P.F.C. de Rivaz and Miss J.R. Small
The engagement is announced between Peter, eldest son of Mr and Mrs Nigel de Rivaz, of Hoddesson, and Jenny, daughter of Mr and Mrs Peter Small, of East Barnet.

Mr M.L. Hanley and Miss C.R. Lewis
The marriage will take place today in Woodstone, Buckinghamshire, of Mr Michael Leopold Hanley, son of Martin Hanley and Susan Hanley, of Woodstone, to Miss Claire Lewis, daughter of Mr and Mrs Lewis, of Woodstone.

Mr R.M. Mahabir and Miss H. Godfrey
The engagement is announced between Rajeev, eldest son of Mr and Mrs R.M. Mahabir, of Raddi, Cardiff, and Hannah, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs H.R. Godfrey, of Didsbury, Manchester.

Mr G.C. Warren and Miss J. Goodman
The marriage took place in Shrewsbury, Shropshire, between Mr Geoffrey Charles Warren and Mrs Judith Goodman, nee Mowson.

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Church services tomorrow

St Andrew's Cathedral, Aberdeen: 10.30 AM. Evensong, 7.30 PM.

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St Andrew's Cathedral, Aberdeen: 1

OBITUARIES

THE REV MICHAEL RANDOLPH

The Rev Michael Randolph, former Editor-in-Chief of the British edition of *Reader's Digest*, died on June 29 aged 72. He was born on January 2, 1925.



Michael Randolph was a master of popular journalism. He became Editor of the British edition of *Reader's Digest* in 1957, when its articles were largely taken from the American parent edition. Over the years he built up the magazine's British content and character so that, by the time he retired as Editor-in-Chief in 1983, it had achieved an ABC circulation of 6 million, a readership of 10 million and a unique place on the British publishing scene.

In the teeth of considerable reservations from the American editors, he made sure that the magazine began covering important local issues of the day, with articles often appearing under distinguished bylines: admirals, academics, bishops, police chiefs, Members of Parliament, trade union leaders.

He had an uncanny ability to bring alive even the most obscure subject for the man in the street, and was very much hands-on editor. When he proposed an article on the dangers of amusement arcades, he himself spent many hours amid their garish lights in the West End so that he would have a "feel" for the lure of fruit-machines when it came to the editing.

Any trace of waffle, equivocation or obfuscation would fall victim to his thick pencil-strokes. "Rewrites" became the norm. He spent hours going through new writers' copy to ensure that they captured the *Digest's* style. He would cheer up those daunted by the process with the remark: "Once you've got the lead anecdote right, you've done half the article."

While building up his own British edition, Randolph also edited slightly varying editions for export to India and South Africa, until, with his help, they became separate editions in their own country. In 1960 he launched *Read*, a simplified edition for Nigerians who spoke English as their second language, which prospered until the Nigerian Civil War in 1965 forced its closure.

Michael Richard Spencer Randolph was born in London, the son of a bank manager. He was educated at Merchant Taylors' School and, as a wartime evacuee, at New Rochelle High School, New York. He spent a year reading law at Oxford, before seeing war service in the Far East with the Royal Navy as a subaltern in the intelligence staff of the Operation Zipper, he took the surrender of several hundred Japanese on the airfield at Port Swettenham, Malaysia. Then followed a year's attachment to the Burma Navy, as Staff Officer (Intelligence) Kangoon, and a return to England and his duties in 1947.

Rather than going back to Oxford to finish his law degree, he worked briefly for a merchant bank, then as a writer, sub-editor and features editor with various women's magazines and the now defunct *John Bull*. He joined *Reader's Digest* in 1956, becoming Editor the following year. In 1966 he became a director of the company.

Appointed deputy executive editor of the *Digest's* International editions in 1978, he travelled widely to share his professionalism and expertise with colleagues on some 40-odd other editions.

Despite this globe-trotting, he found time to do much in his home village of Smarden, Kent, where he served as churchwarden and parish councillor. He was chairman and then president of the Weald of Kent Preservation Society.

He was also a council member of the British Atlantic Committee. For 12 years he served on the Press Council. He was chairman of the British Society of Magazine Editors in 1973, on the board of the Periodical Publishers Association from 1980 to 1983, and on the editorial committee of the *Fédération Internationale de la Presse Périodique*. In 1987 he received the president's award of the Periodical Publishers Association, and the editor of distinction award from the British Society of Magazine Editors.

When he retired from journalism in 1983, he devoted himself to 20 years of hard theological study. After training at Canterbury, he was made deacon in 1990 and ordained an Anglican priest in 1991. As curate and non-stipendiary minister in Smarden, he built up another wide circle of friends.

He continued to carry out his pastoral duties into his seventies, when fibrosing alveolitis gradually robbed him of his lung capacity. Yet friends who journeyed to visit him found him battling on with his customary good humour.

His interests ranged from 18th-century English porcelain to the raising of Irish dogs. He was the inspiration behind the imaginative scheme to mark the 50th anniversary of British *Reader's Digest* by planting the magazine's circulation in crocuses at Kew Gardens. The 1.6 million-bulb carpet of colour remains a popular tourist attraction each spring.

He is survived by his wife Jennifer, whom he married in 1952, and by two sons and two daughters.

MARJORIE LINKLATER

Marjorie Linklater, campaigner for the arts, heritage and the environment in Orkney, died in Kirkwall, Orkney, on June 29 aged 88. She was born in Edinburgh on March 19, 1909.

The life of a rural community often depends as much on the energy and commitment of a few individuals as on the quality of its local authority, or the policies of central government. The influence of Marjorie Linklater, first in the county of Ross and Cromarty and later in Orkney, can be measured by the rich legacy of causes she embraced and the many institutions she helped to create in the North of Scotland.

Her campaigns were never aggressive — she found that charm and persistence were far more effective — but they were remarkably successful. A "green" activist long before the term was coined, she fought off plans to mine uranium on the Orkney mainland and to dump nuclear waste off the island's west coast. She devoted herself, along with another formidable Orkney character, Laura Grimond, to the restoration of the 8th-century chapel of St Boniface on the island of Papa Westray; and she helped to set up the now famous St Magnus Festival, as well as the equally popular Orkney Folk Festival.

As a county councillor in Easter Ross she argued the case for rural schools, including one in the remote village of Plockton, where she secured the appointment of a celebrated headmaster, the Gaelic poet Sorley MacLean.

As chairman of the Orkney Heritage Society she was instrumental in acquiring a full-time archaeologist to preserve the island's precious prehistoric remains. And as a devoted member of the Scottish National Party, she was still, at the age of 83, prepared to set out in all weathers in search of

elusive votes in that most unpromising of Nationalist territories.

Much of this she achieved in the years following the death of her husband, the novelist Eric Linklater. Throughout their long and sometimes tempestuous married life, her own ambitions had to come second to the demands of his literary career. But when he died in Aberdeen in 1974, she decided to strike out on her own, returning to live in Orkney, where they had begun their marriage. The seeds of her initiative and sense of adventure went back to her girlhood in Edinburgh, and a short-lived but colourful acting career on the London stage.

Born Marjorie MacIntyre, the daughter of Ian MacIntyre, a celebrated writer to the Signet who was also a Conservative MP for Edinburgh West, she was one of six children.

Educated at St George's School in Edinburgh and Down House in Berkshire, she went on to study at RADA and act in various small West End parts. That she was a great beauty can be judged from early photographs and a fine portrait by Stanley Cursiter. She formed a friendship with the cricketer Douglas Jardine, and remembers spending long and tedious afternoons at the Oval watching distant people in white flannels doing not very much.

Back in Edinburgh, she met Eric Linklater, then a rising young writer, and they married in 1933. He described her as the first girl he had met who could appreciate a good bottle of claret. She recognised that she had taken on a character as strong as herself. "To the

end of his life he thought as he wished and spoke as he thought," she said later. Their quarrels were often loud and furious, but the marriage lasted and thrived over the years.

In 1947 the family moved to Easter Ross, where she became a county councillor, involved in education, health and conservation issues. She delighted in her unofficial title, the "lavatory queen" of Ross-shire, a description accorded her after she had campaigned for more public toilets in the area.

Her move to Orkney coincided with important initiatives, both cultural and environmental. In Stromness, the Pier Arts Centre, housed in a converted 18th-century boathouse beside the harbour, became a showcase for modern art, with Marjorie as its founder-chairman. She helped Sir Peter Maxwell Davies to create the St Magnus Festival, now in its 21st year and a leading venue for modern music; she remained its honorary vice-president. She initiated the Johnstons Foy, which has become the festival's main literary event.

Politically, she also spread her wings. She joined the SNP and became the local agent for the veteran MEP Winnie Ewing, who said of her: "If I could have a wand and be in power in Scotland, I would have urged that she be an ambassador." Marjorie herself was more doubtful: "I sometimes wonder whether an old woman of 80 is the best person to represent the party of tomorrow," she once said. But at heart she herself was one of its youngest supporters.

Despite the onset of cancer and heart failure, she remained active in Orkney life up to the end, her home in Kirkwall a mecca for visitors. Only the week before her death she was able to attend the last concert of the 1997 Festival. She is survived by two sons and two daughters.



GEORGE HARRISON MARKS



George Harrison Marks, film director and variety producer, died on June 27 aged 67. He was born in London on August 6, 1929.

IN THE 1950s and 1960s George Harrison Marks was infamous for making black-and-white films of young women in various states of undress. Like the people in *Health and Efficiency* magazine, which portrayed families of nudists on holiday, Marks's girls spent most of their time bouncing around with beach balls.

The films were made on lower-than-low budgets and filmed in a day, often under appalling conditions. Yet in an odd sort of way they were box-office hits, bringing what would now be termed "soft porn" to British screens.

No one in them won any Oscars for acting, and the sets were dreadful, but they had one thing going for them: Marks's commentaries. "And here's the lovely Linda," he would intone, "together with her family, by the seaside without her clothes on, completely naked and unashamed — just as nature intended." Nature clearly intended some funny things.

George Harrison Marks was born in north London and from an early age had a keen interest in variety and music-hall. As a teenager he would visit local theatres to see luminaries such as Will Hay, Gracie Fields and George Formby.

He tried his luck as a comedian in his early twenties, and formed a double act, "Harrison and Stewart", which toured the country but was not entirely a success.

A chance meeting with the model Pamela Green, who was appearing at the famous Windmill Theatre in the 1950s in semi-nude revues, prompted him to take up filmmaking, with Green as the star attraction. She later became his wife.

He hired, and later bought, a small cinema in Great Windmill Street in London, and the first of his films, *Naked and Unashamed*, was shown there. It drew packed audiences four times a day, with no shortage of raincoats whatever the weather. Such was its striking success that he continued to make 20-minute "shorts", which were snapped up by small cinemas throughout the country. The name Harrison Marks became for ever associated with a genre that he had created.

He then developed his own film company, offering through such publications as *Plays and Players* and *Films and Filming* to supply 8mm reels to postal buyers "under a plain brown wrapper". The titles usually included the phrase "Naked and Unashamed" and confidentiality was guaranteed.

He made more than 500 of these films, and a small for-

tune, but he was an extravagant, lavish-spending man, often seen at expensive London restaurants and at the first nights of West End shows. For many years he was considered a rival to Soho's Paul Raymond, though Raymond was the more sophisticated of the two.

Despite the fact that by the 1970s his little films were hopelessly outdated — even period pieces — Marks was prosecuted several times for dealing in pornography. But he went on to make *Come Play With Me*, financed by David Sullivan, and ended as the publisher of low-rent, spanking videos and the deviant magazine *Kane*.

Ill-health and bad business management forced him into semi-retirement in the 1990s, but he returned to his old love of variety theatre in 1992 to present a bill at London's Shaw Theatre, starring the comedienne Joan Turner. The show attracted considerable publicity, and as a result he was asked to appear on the *Derek Jameson Breakfast Show* on BBC Radio 2 and affected to be amused when Jameson said: "I seem to remember your films from some time."

A raconteur and showman, he was something of an icon of his era. As he said in an interview shortly before his death: "My material was just it and bum and very harmless. The publicity was much more lurid than you saw on the screen. I'm quite shocked to see what's on the screen these days."

He published his autobiography, *The Naked World of Harrison Marks*, which appeared in 1970.

He was married three times, is survived by all his former wives and by a daughter.

ANN LENNER

Ann Lenner, dance band singer, died on June 4 aged 84. She was born on Christmas Eve, 1912.

ANN LENNER was the first resident female singer at the Savoy Hotel.

She was born into a theatre family in Aylesbury, Bedfordshire, to Arthur and Florence Green, who performed under the stage name of Lenner. Like their parents, she and her four sisters — Judy, Rosa, Ivy and Shirley — all had strong singing voices. Judy became the singer Judy Shirley, while Ann and Ida became a successful dance act known as "the Lenner Sisters". That came to an end when Ida married, and Ann then took occasional engagements, either solo or with her parents.

In 1934 she was heard in a London nightclub by the bandleader Carroll Gibbons, who signed her up for his newly-formed Savoy Hotel Orpheans. The hotel management did not take kindly to seeing a girl on the stage, and did all it could to persuade Gibbons to disperse with her. But he refused, and she went on to broadcast regularly with the band and to become a favourite with radio listeners and record-buyers.

During her seven years with the Orpheans she recorded almost 150 titles on 78rpm records. Many of these were later rereleased on LPs, which are now sought after by record collectors and nostalgic danceband enthusiasts. She also appeared with Carroll Gibbons's Boy Friends.

When the Blitz started, the hotel cancelled all dancing, but after a while it resumed, and the band was reformed. In the meantime, Ann had married the rising young actor Gordon Little, later commissioned in the Royal Navy,

though the marriage was not to last.

As well as appearing in various troop entertainments, she had a regular spot in a BBC series during the war years called *Composer Serenade*, with the BBC Concert Orchestra, when she shared the microphone with Denny Dennis and Leslie Douglas.

During the war and for a short time afterwards she was in demand with various band leaders for concerts, dances and recordings. She could be heard on records with Louis Levy's Gaumont Orchestra, Frank Weir's Astor Club Seven, the Joe Loss Band, Maurice Winnick's Ciro's Club



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MICHAEL JACKSON, Four from one Olympic Collection, Thursday 17th July, 0203 480559.

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EUROPEAN Clio, 1997, 1.6 litre, 100,000 miles, 12,000. Tel: 01773 480 5185.

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LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 1985

NOTICE is hereby given that a Petition was presented to the High Court of Justice at London on the 27th day of June 1997, in the matter of the above-named company, for an order that the company be wound up.

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TO PLACE NOTICES FOR THIS SECTION - PLEASE TELEPHONE

0171-680 6878

OR

FAX 0171-401 9313

Notices are subject to confirmation and should be received by 2.30pm two days prior to insertion.

ISRAEL REJOICES AT SUCCESS TO FREE ENTEBBE HOSTAGES

From Eric Marsden

TEL AVIV, JULY 4

An exultant Israel today welcomed back safely more than 100 hijack hostages, and the troops who had freed them, in one of the most spectacular and audacious commando operations in its Army's history.

News of the Army's exploit sent Israeli thunderstruck with joy at their breakfast tables. They had expected a day of tension and possible agony as the 11am (GMT) deadline approached by which the terrorists had threatened to blow up the aircraft unless 40 convicted terrorists in Israeli jails and 13 in France, West Germany, Switzerland and Kenya were released.

It is now clear that while serious in making a counter-offer to free a number of terrorists, the Army's leaders were working on their rescue plan anticipating a rejection of their offer.

As the news of the rescue spread, Israel staged a day of celebration. People sang and danced in the streets and parks, workers offered to put in an extra day without pay, donations poured in to Army charities and a

ON THIS DAY

July 5, 1976

On June 27 Palestinian terrorists hijacked an Air France Airbus shortly after take-off at Athens. It was flown to Entebbe where 86 people were held hostage. In a brilliant operation lasting less than one hour, Israeli commandos overcame the guards, killed the terrorists and freed the hostages.

light aircraft traced in the sky the signal *Kol Hakorad Lezaha* (all honour to Israel's defence forces).

Hundreds of relatives were waiting, singing and shouting slogans two hours before the aircraft with the freed hostages arrived from Nairobi. They were ferried to an air base near Tel Aviv for reunions. A rabbi was blowing the ram's horn piercingly. Men carrying bouquets of flowers sang patriotic songs while the women sat in the shade, many weeping.

A white-haired man who gave his name only as David said that when the attack began the terrorists went for their guns and one

threw a grenade, but the fight was over in a few minutes. There was general agreement that though President Amin of Uganda had frequently visited the hostages and tried to encourage them, he was collaborating with the hijackers. One of the freed said that Ugandan troops had taken turns in guarding the hostages while the terrorists slept.

Charles Harrison writes from Nairobi: Although there is no complete information from Entebbe, reports support the Israeli claim that explosive charges were dropped at the end of the runway as a diversion, after which the three Israeli aircraft landed close to the old terminal building where the hostages were held at last.

The tail ramp of the transport dropped as the aircraft braked and several jeeps full of heavily armed troops roared down the ramp on to the tarmac, and reached the old terminal within seconds, killing the hijackers in a brief clash.

Once the firing stopped, the hostages were quickly marshalled on board the waiting aircraft, and the whole operation is said to have been completed within 36 minutes. The three aircraft then flew to Nairobi, where an emergency medical team had been summoned to the airport to attend to some of the wounded hostages.

NEWS

Broadcast from the red planet

Mars Pathfinder last night plunged through the Martian atmosphere, man's first visitor to the surface of the red planet for more than 20 years. Just after 6pm Flight Director Rob Manning announced to cheering scientists at mission control in Pasadena that the spacecraft had landed after a flight of 309 million miles and was broadcasting a signal. "We're down," a delighted Manning shouted out. Pages 1, 5, 20

Bill of Rights by end of next year

A Bill of Rights will be in place by the end of next year, enabling people to seek justice in British rather than European courts for breaches of human rights. A White Paper will be published in the autumn and a Bill soon after. Page 1

Patient disarmed

A woman police officer disarmed an HIV-positive patient who went berserk and threatened to stab hospital staff with a syringe contaminated with his blood. Page 1

Bird of prey

Paula, the eagle owl which is devouring pigeons at St Paul's Cathedral, is at the centre of a debate about capturing birds. Page 3

Observatory closes

The Royal Greenwich Observatory at Cambridge is closing with the loss of 100 jobs. Its work will be transferred to Edinburgh. Page 5

Kiss of peace

The Methodist Church is worried about sexual harassment during the "peace", when worshippers are urged to hug and kiss. Page 10

Not enough rain

Despite the wettest June since 1860, large areas of southern and eastern England face summer water shortages in 1998. Page 12

The Crowborough goldmine mystery

Crowborough in East Sussex will welcome 25,000 visitors this weekend as it cashes in on its connections with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, creator of Sherlock Holmes, who lived there for 23 years. There will be local Holmes wine, Sherlock sausage and a Hound of the Baskervilles dog show. Pages 1, 21

Stalin's victims

Russian amateur historians claim to have uncovered three mass graves where more than 9,000 victims of Stalin's purges are believed to be buried. Page 14

Under the volcano

Young Montserratians, crammed into makeshift shelters to escape the volcano, have found solace in alcohol and casual sex. Page 15

La Lollo at 70

Gina Lollobrigida, the Italian film actress, celebrated her 70th birthday said she had buried her feud with Sophia Loren. Page 16

Holocaust rebuff

A Holocaust victim's son trying to get his father's savings from a Swiss bank in London was told it was "enemy property". Page 17

The darling of Paris

At 34, Arnaud Montebourg has a seat in the National Assembly and the adoration of the Socialist Party. The boy done good. Page 18

NATURE NOTES



Fig. 1 Lying toad

Giant Toad (*Hammonia corruptus*)

A species once protected by the authorities, this clammy creature crawls out from under stones to seek exposure. The female is dominant.

OPINION

Emine and fox: If the Tories become identified as the party of the fox, foxhunter and fifth Viscount Frenchingham will find their support restricted to the Cayman Islands, the Quorn and Debreit's. Page 21

Lady C's husband: An eighth of Sir Terence's riches seems a small price to pay for 33 years of cooking, caring and ego-stroking. Page 21

COLUMNS

Simon Jenkins: Of all the hypocritical deposits to fall from the rear end of the Palace of Westminster, few equal the Downy report. Page 20

Tim Haines: Americans are extraordinary people. Few others would send a space probe 300 million miles to find themselves. Page 20

BUSINESS

Economy: City fears grew that the consumer spending boom would accelerate after it emerged that nearly a quarter of Woolwich Building Society members have decided to sell their free shares immediately. Page 25

Casinos: The Monopolies and Mergers Commission is expected to approve London Clubs International's £190 million bid for the rival Capital Corporation. Page 25

SPORT

Cricket: Shane Warne took five wickets to leave England struggling at 161 for eight in the third Test, 74 runs behind Australia. Page 48

Tennis: Pete Sampras, the No 1 seed, reached the men's singles final at Wimbledon with a 6-2, 6-1, 7-6 victory over Todd Woodbridge. Page 48

Golf: Lee Westwood led by two strokes after the second round of the Irish Open at Druids Glen. Page 47

Cash question: The South Bank does need its £170 million, facelift, Richard Morrison writes. But the Heritage Secretary knows "jobs for the cronies" must will fly if Lord Rogers is given another plum lottery commission. Page 19

Candidate at the Gate: Benedict Nightingale enjoys a lively update of Voltaire's *Candide* at the Gate in west London. Page 19

Economy drive: The car that does 2,000mpg

SECTION

It's your choice: picking a baby's sex. Page 8
Top cricketers. Page 21
Summer wines. Page 46
Jan Morris. Page 27

Weekend

Cool capital: Is London the hippest city? Page 1



Property: Prep school for sale. Pages 7, 8
Travel: Paris South Africa. Hungary. Pages 15-20

10 15

Disinfect: We preview *The Lost World*. Page 6
Networking: How to spin your own web. Page 10

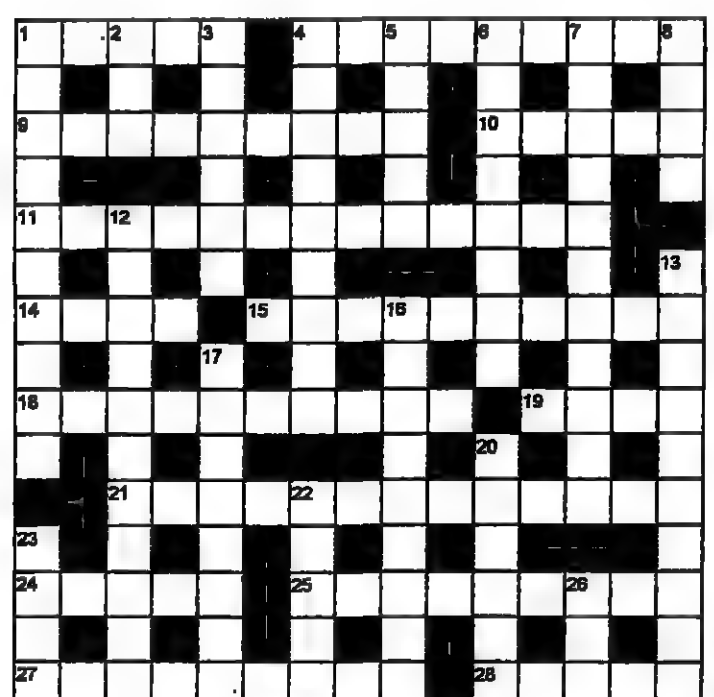


Bigger screen: Welcome to the megaplex. Page 6
Mood food. Pages 7, 8
Beach books. Pages 9-11
TV and radio. Pages 23-6

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,524

A £20 book token will be awarded to the senders of the first five correct solutions opened next Thursday. Entries should be addressed to: The Times, Saturday Crossword Competition, PO Box 486, Virginia Street, London E1 9DD. The names of the winners and the solution will be published next Saturday.

Name/Address



- ACROSS**
- Musical with piano in prom (5).
 - Article in magazine that's potentially disastrous (6,3).
 - Battle against tribunal (9).
 - Express disapproval through giving the bird (5).
 - One entitled to define himself as a harmless drudge (6,7).
 - Guy's book abridged (4).
 - Not being present for the Latin class (2,8).
 - Where people learn one piece of poetry, mostly in harmony (10).
 - Story-teller's one article that's sidesplitting (4).
 - Shortfall in electricity supply that could disrupt family communications? (10,3).
 - Standard of fitness it's good to mull (5).
 - Crewmen put down cards (5,4).
 - English reader, a learner in a sort of college (9).
 - Continue to shake in vehicle (5).
- DOWN**
- Face for day in France (4,2,4).
 - What one's written after letter one's written after letter (3).
 - Pay attention to cricket side's number (6).
 - Order Joan and Les up for a dance (4,5).
 - Dangerous woman accompanying Conservative inside (5).
 - Produced relief with half of them given orders (8).
 - Ignorant type making part of lock now, not hinge (4-7).
 - European painter unknown in part of India (4).
 - Decider after draw, with players given to being disorderly (7,4).
 - Courteous in requesting fare? (4-6).
 - Use it to dry one's face — and below that to over the place (4,5).
 - Control horse with something worn to plough back (8).
 - Don't buy this author (6).
 - Drawing instrument found amongst dividers? (5).
 - Fit to enter university in time (4).
 - Amount of work that's so never-ending (3).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,518

FIRESIDE CASBAH
AND GILBERT
TANTALUS POMPOM
KRELL GAT
MELLFAVOUR
NDECTI
OSTER GOODRIE
GULIBERSI
BOHEMIANS KASE
IT ZLENA
DISAGREABLE
DHEODLDH
IRISES ADDITIVE
NFS ENVA
GATHER PREGNANT

Solution to Puzzle No 20,523

CLIMAX LEFTWING
AARTIEO
NUTCRACKER NECK
KRELL GAT
FAIRBANK MAMOUT
ADHD
OBIT EARTHING
LEWCKOA
WINDFALL LULL
NAMESAME
ADRIAT PROVINCE
NEPTUNE
MARC FREEBOOTER
TAURENA
REYNOLDS DUENNA

LAST WEEK'S WINNERS: I R Hall, Farnham, Surrey; J H Hargreaves, New Milton, Hampshire; A Richens, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire; A Wild, Bournemouth, Dorset; I Stratton, Westminster, Wilshire.

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HOURS OF DARKNESS

TODAY
Sun rises: 4:51 am
Moon sets: 9:19 pm
Moon rises: 5:50 am

TOMORROW
Sun rises: 4:51 am
Moon sets: 9:19 pm
Moon rises: 5:50 am

First quarter July 12
London 9:10 pm to 4:52 am
Bristol 9:20 pm to 4:42 am
Edinburgh 9:59 pm to 4:36 am
Manchester 9:58 pm to 4:37 am
Penzance 9:34 pm to 4:50 am

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FORECAST

General: southeast England and East Angles may catch a shower at first before turning dry and bright. Wales and the rest of England will have sunny breaks. Shattered eastern parts of Scotland and Northern Ireland should also have a fine day.

London, SE England, E Angles: possible showers in morning, mainly dry by afternoon with sunshine at times. Light northwesterly wind. Max 22C (72F).

Can't N & S, E, and NE England, E & W Midlands: dry with patchy cloud and spells of sunshine. Light northwesterly wind. Max 21C (70F).

Channel Isles, SW, NW England, S & N Wales, Lake District, Isle of Man: dry with patchy cloud. Light northwesterly wind. Max 20C (68F).

Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Cant Highlands, Moray Firth: dry with hazy sunshine in morning, but clouding over in north and west later. Light to moderate southwesterly wind. Max 19C (66F).

S & W Scotland, Glasgow, N Ireland: dry morning with sunny spells, clouding over later. Moderate southwesterly wind. Max 18C (64F).

NE & NW Scotland, Argyll, Orkney, Shetland: early bright spells, but cloudy by afternoon with patchy rain. Freshening southwesterly wind. Max 17C (63F).

Outlook: northwest Scotland and Northern Ireland will have some cloud and light rain tomorrow, with an improvement on Monday. The rest of the country will be dry and very warm with a good deal of sunshine.

Pollens: low in N and S Scotland, NE, SE and Cant S England, Midlands, East Angles, and London; moderate in N Ireland, N and S Wales, and NW and SW England. (Forecast supplied by the Pollen Research Unit)

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

24 hrs to 8 pm: b = bright; c = cloudy; d = drizzle; q = dust; s = sun; w = wind; f = fog; g = gale; h = hail

Area	Sun	Rain	C	M	S	F	G	H
Aberdeen	1.8	0.01	16	61	sh			
Anglosey	10.1		17	63	sh			
Armagh	8.4	0.01	18	64	sh			
Ashford	1.1	0.01	17	63	sh			
Belfast	6.3	0.01	18	64	sh			
Birmingham	8.3	0.01	18	64	sh			
Bognor R	4.3	0.18	18	64	sh			
Bournemouth	4.1	0.02	20	68	sh			
Bristol	7.7		21	70	sh			
Buckingham	7.1	0.01	18	64	sh			
Cardiff	8.8	0.01	18	64	sh			
Cardigan	2.0	0.06	17	63	sh			
Carmarthen	8.4		18	64	sh			
Caswell	3.3	0.17	17	63	sh			
Chesham	9.2		20	68	sh			
Chichester	7.2	0.08	18	64	sh			
Colchester	8.8	0.01	18	64	sh			
Consett	7.5		17	63	sh			
Doncaster	8.4		18	64	sh			
Edinburgh	9.2		20	68	sh			
Edinburgh	7.2	0.08	18	64	sh			
Exeter	8.8	0.01	18	64	sh			
Falmouth	8.4		17	63	sh			
Gloucester	8.4		17	63	sh			
Grimsby	7.7		21	70	sh			
Hastings	2.7	0.06	17	63	sh			
Hayling I	3.8	0.02	16	61	sh			
Hereford	2.0	0.17	18	64	sh			
Hereford	4.1		17	63	sh			
Hereford	3.7	0.06	18	64	sh			
Hereford	3.7	0.04	18	64	sh			
Hereford	1.5	0.02	18	64	sh			
Hereford	7.5		21	70	sh			

ABROAD

Aljaco	26	78 s	Donk	23	91 s
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Sandy Gall
within a
whisker
of his life
travel 16

THE TIMES

weekend

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SATURDAY JULY 5 1997

'London may be hip - but your underwear scores nul points'

Jane Burton invites four young
Parisians to the world's coolest
city. Does it cut the mustard?

Even couch potatoes from the planet Zog must know that London is, for the moment, the centre of the style universe. The Americans proclaimed it first. Newsweek hailed London as the capital of cool last December but then, such is America's love affair with the mother country that some of its citizens would find a Yorkshire pudding chic. It means rather more, however, when the praise comes from the French.

"Le boom de Londres" has arrived, announces *Paris Match*. Indeed, it is the trendiest place in Europe, says *Nova* magazine in a whole supplement inviting its readers to "aller" and "be British".

The June issue of *Dépêche Mode* waxed lyrical about the charms of the British job and his à la mode accessories: birds, beer and le football.

Paris Match's "le swinging London" top ten includes, predictably, those "mauvais garçons" Oasis, the "belle Anglaise" Elizabeth Hurley, Ewan McGregor and Damien Hirst. And, of course, the Spice Girls, or "les filles spices". Being French, everything is cranked up a libidinal notch: Ginger Spice becomes "Sexy-Spicy" while Baby Spice is the intriguing "Lolita Perverse". As for Page 3 pin-up Melinda Messenger, you can almost hear the sigh of relief that we frigid English have thawed at last as they rhapsodise about her "triumphant bosom".

However, somewhere in the Channel fog, the wires have crossed. In a Cantona-esque flight of poetic fancy, *Paris Match* dribbles the ball neatly up a cul-de-sac and along with Britpop, Brit Fash, Brit Art and Brit Boobs, unilaterally declares the Marquis of Bath, John Cleese and Richard Branson as high priests of London hip. Excusez-moi?

Meanwhile Eurostar, which shunts about 170,000 French visitors to London each month, most

of them under 40, has been cashing in with an advertising campaign in the French press promoting everything from the "ultimate clubbing experience" at the Ministry of Sound and Ab-Fab shopping at Harvey Nichols, to curry houses. There is not a whisper about red telephone boxes, pearly kings and queens or Hogarthian sides of roast beef.

The times are obviously changing. So, in the interests of continental understanding, we took four young Parisians on a whistle-stop tour of London to sort their opinions, or at least their preconceptions, from their Jarvis Cockers, their Bransons from their Blurs. The willing volunteers were Marc Cosnard des Closters, 34, a cheese exporter, and his wife Gaile, 32, a graphic designer, who arrived on the Friday morning on Eurostar with their friends Cecile Bauduin-Ménard, 21, and Robert Downey, 35, both actors.

The journey had been a delight, said Marc, especially the opportunity to peruse the Kent countryside. "I like to see the sheep. Sometimes they go faster than the train." At a somewhat speedier pace, we set out from Waterloo to discover London.

Friday 12.30pm.

Bar Italia. First stop Bar Italia, immortalised by Jarvis Cocker in the song, he named after it as a mecca for London's washed-up clubbers: "You can't go home and go to bed because it hasn't worn off yet, and now it's morning. There's only one place we can go, it's round the corner in Soho..." Right place, then, only it's the wrong time. At 12.30 in the afternoon, the clubbers have finally stumbled home and we are standing in the washed-up tourist zone instead.

1pm, Quo Vadis

We adjourn a few streets away for lunch at Quo Vadis, the latest restaurant of Marco Pierre White.



Not so chic: our Parisian visitors were unimpressed with London style as expressed in the lingerie boutique Agent Provocateur. "Transparent things aren't sexy," they insisted

fitted out by Damien Hirst. Upstairs in the bar, European Union takes its first blow when the waitress, asked for a glass of pastis, raises her eyebrows and says "what's that?"

The highly strung Marco Pierre has been heard to mutter darkly about putting horses' heads in the beds of those who cross him, so it is no surprise that he should favour Hirst's flayed cows in

formaldehyde as decor. But the all-pervading whiff of preservative gets right up delicate French noses. "It smells disgusting. In France we prefer to eat our cows, not stuff them," says Marc who, it is becoming clear, is a master of the verbal Gallic shrug. The food receives better reviews: "When I told friends I was coming, they said 'yuk, mint sauce with everything and jelly!' But

the things we have eaten are very good." The wine list, however, is greeted with snorts of derision: "One glass is as much as a pitcher in France!"

3pm, Le Shopping. Somewhat under-lubricated as a result of strike action over prices, we head for Soho and Joe Corre's lingerie boutique, Agent Provocateur. Corre is the son of Vivienne Westwood

and Malcolm McLaren, and his shop is brimming with its-bitsy proof that the days of armpit-hugging knickers are numbered on these shores. But although his merchandise may be favoured by supermodels, it seems it does not cut the mustard.

"It's not provocative at all. Transparent things are not sexy. There is no leather or rubber or lace," insists Gaile, making that

"mou" thing with her mouth that only French girls can pull off. Marc, although taken with a diamanté studded whip, is similarly nonplussed: "It is very civilised. If you call yourself provocateur, you should be provoking - like in Figalie. How many years must we wait until British women wear the Figalie style?"

Nul points, then, for our underwear. We are stuck

in a Carry On time warp, all slap and tickle and not enough raunch as far as smart Parisians are concerned. The rest of our clothes, however, have been seized upon wholeheartedly. Not only have young British designers (Stella McCartney, Alexander McQueen et al) invaded the halls of haute couture, our pop stars have

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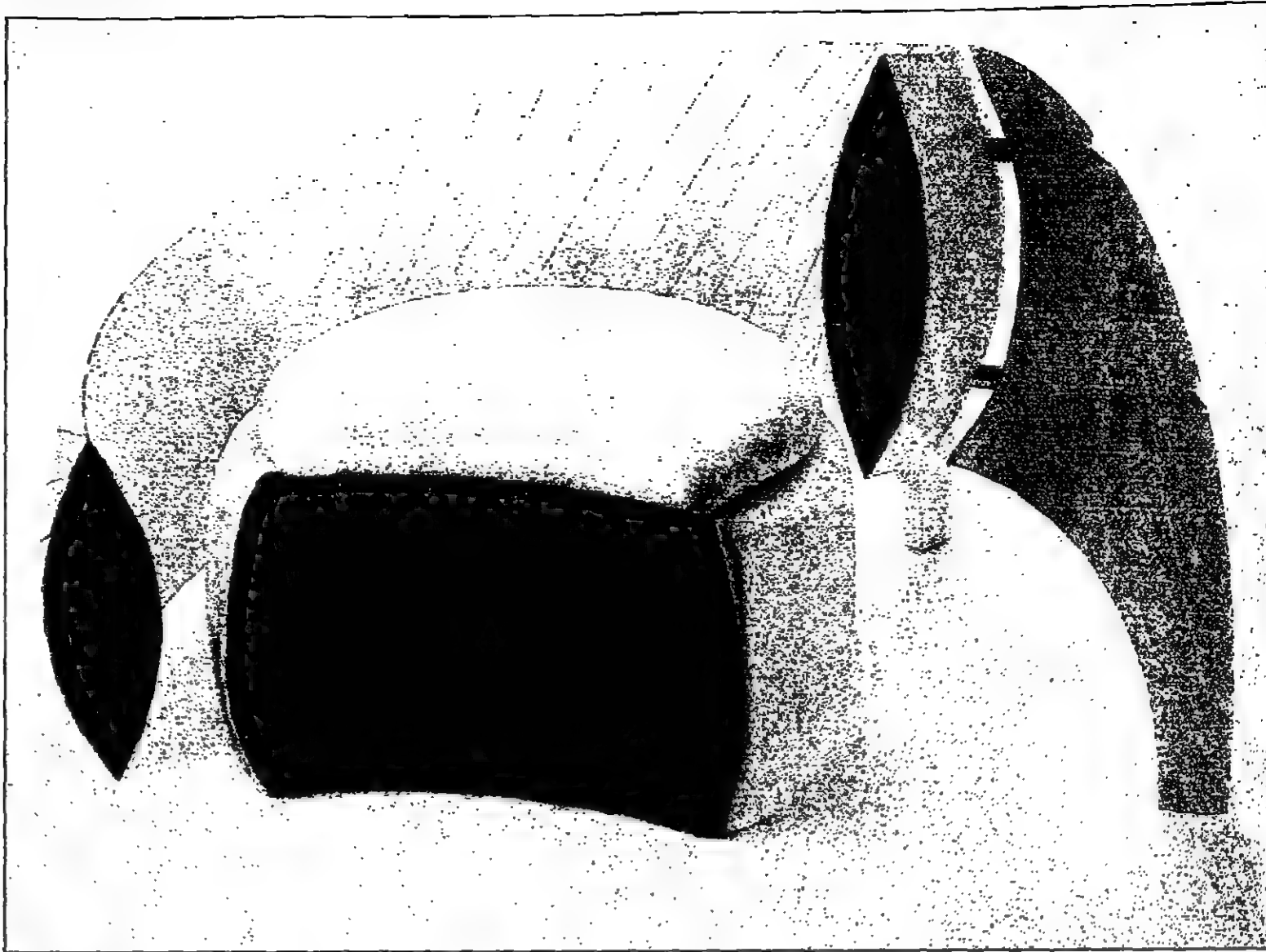


*Subject to conditions and availability. Calls charged at local rate. All calls are monitored for quality.

The future of British furniture is in good hands with the latest crop of design graduates. Sudi Pigott reveals the shape of things to come

The new classic collection

IF YOU ARE in search of style classics for the home of tomorrow, look no further than the New Designers' Exhibition. Now in its eleventh year, this is a brilliant showcase for the new crop of young British talent. It features beautifully crafted, innovative pieces, from lighting and tableware to furniture and textiles and offers you the chance to buy or commission the work. Here are some of the quirkiest and most covetable works



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:
"Helix" chaise, £2,135 in aeropy, birch plywood and maple by John Haskins (Inquiries: 20 Bydell Gardens, Highworth, Swindon, Wilts SN6 7BS, 01793 762504)

Chest of drawers in the round made from maple, maple veneer and MDF, £800 by Stephen Chappell (Inquiries: Hutton Shores, Hutton, Western Supermarket, North Somerset BS24 9QQ, 01934 812778)

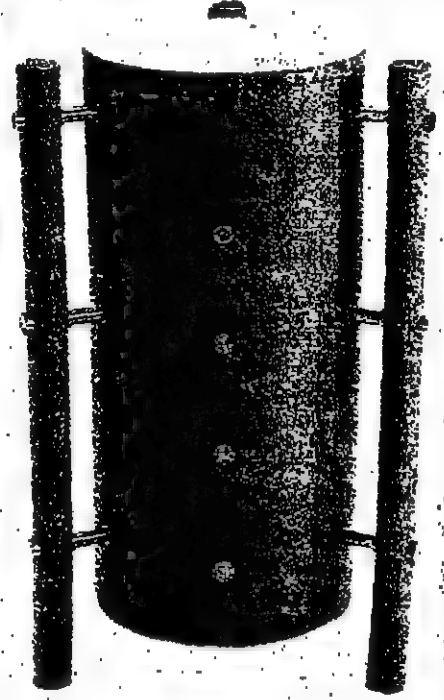
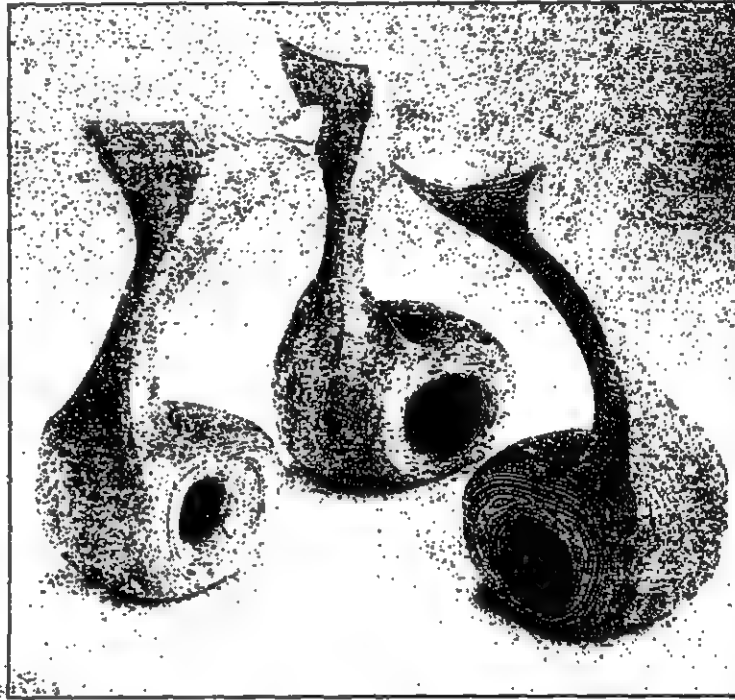
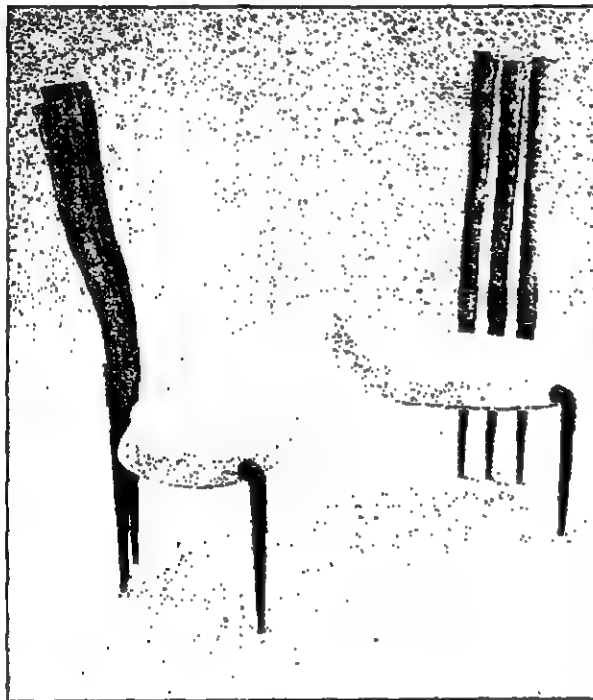
Birch plywood "Snails" strokeable tables, £650 each, by Edward Beharrell (Inquiries: Brook Cottage, Singleton, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 0EX, 01243 811704)

Twisted vases in slip cast earthenware, £45 each by Sara Carruthers (Inquiries: 107 Brackenwood Road, Highgate Babington, Maresfield L63 2LU, 0151-608 7387)

Conversational chair in forged steel and oak, £2,500 by Teresa Dosanjh (Inquiries: 12 St Jude's Avenue, Mapperley Park, Nottingham NG3 5FG, 0115-960 4502)

"Drinks like a fish" cabinet made from laminated plywood, ash and beer cans, £300 by Alison Fraser (Inquiries: 27 Hughenden Road, High Wycombe, Bucks HP13 5HS, 01494 521041)

Fusion II solid beech framed two-seater sofa, £1,900, by Teresa Fernandes (Inquiries: 38 Huddleston Road, London N7, 0171-609 3899)



THE New Designers Exhibition at The Business Design Centre, 52 Upper Street, Islington, London N1 0QH (0171-359 3338). Part 1 Textiles, Fashion, Flooring and Craft July 10-13; Part 2 Interiors, 3D Product Design, Jewellery and Craft July 17-20. Thursdays to Saturdays 10am-1pm. Sundays 10am-4pm. Admission £6 (£4 concs) or £9 (£6 concs) for both weeks.

'In Paris we don't queue, we push, and if we don't get in, we leave'

Continued from page 1
put British fashion on the streets.

Soigné Parisian youth are swapping their sports jackets and polo necks for an Oasis-infused blend of retro-wuff. Unfortunately they will iron their anoraks, which tends to detract from the effect. Or as Robert puts it: "The French might want to copy the British

style, but they have an impediment — the notion of chic."

The next stop is Paul Smith's in Covent Garden, which Marc and Gail adore: "It is very young and classically English, with a sense of humour," they enthuse, although they are not sure they would dare to wear some of the wilder creations. "In Paris, people look at you strangely if

you wear bright colours," says Gail. "I have a friend who was beaten up just because she has blue hair."

London may be stuffed to the gills with innovative boutiques — from heavy-duty designers to cut-price chic — but then so is Paris. The French are much more interested in what they have not got. In Cecile's case this turns out to be feminist bookstores or, more precisely, jokes about men. She heads straight for the humour section in Silver Moon on Charing Cross Road: "I love it. French men are so sexist, they wouldn't appreciate this at all."

Marc is on his own personal mission. He already exports organic cheese to America, now he feels it is our turn. Everywhere we go, the faintest suggestion of a delicatessen has him frothing at the mouth for a new cheese experience: "I eat cheese twice a day — minimum," he announces, tasting Guinness-flavoured cheddar at the International Cheese Centre.

More bizarrely, they also want to go to Bonts — "for bicarbonate toothpaste, and deodorant — it has a chemical that we don't have in France". So there we have it: London triumphs over Paris in the battle against BO.

5pm, Fulham
After dinner at The Mission, a local restaurant run by some of Robert's English friends, we head for the slim strip of the Fulham Road known as the Beach — where the Jemimas and Tamaras of this world frolic. We pitch up outside Janer's Bar, but it is 11.15pm and last orders have been called — one tradition which Parisians, whose bars stay open until lam, are happy we should keep to ourselves.

12.30am, Ministry of Sound
Another cab ride takes us to Soho again, where Bar Italia's customers are spilling out along Frith Street. A quick espresso, then we are off to that south London "super-

club", Ministry of Sound. The queue outside sparks a slight diplomatic incident.

The French realise that not only do they have to stand in line, they might not even get in if the bouncers do not like the look of them. "The queue is stupid. Why wait if you still have to be selected? In Paris we don't queue, we push, and if we don't get in, we leave," Marc harrumphs.

The club has been packing in London's ravers for the past five years, but its sound system, three separate dance floors, chill-out rooms and big name DJs can't disguise the fact that it is really just a warehouse full of teenagers desperate to pull.

With an average age of 30, we are definitely over the hill. "It's like Euro Disney — somewhere you should take your children... bye bye, have fun kids," is Marc's opinion. Accurate, but a bit rich coming from a nation whose idea of a good night out is getting on down to Michael Jackson.

Saturday 11am, the East End
Beary-eyed and exhausted from the night before, we meet in Whitechapel. Nothing cures a hangover like a plateful of egg, bacon and chips. Even the French are forced to admit that there are times when a winchish croissant just does not do the trick. After a brief encounter with one of the locals — ably demonstrating that other cockney custom, the liquid breakfast of Special Brew — we pile into the nearest greasy spoon.

Brown sauce is a big hit, but what we have really come for is the art. Gilbert and George live down the road, and this corner of London is crisscrossed with galleries and studios.

A stone's throw from Brick Lane is Commercial Too, an impromptu gallery set up in a former synagogue, where 31 young artists have run amok. There is a room full of mouldering bread, a man stuck down a lift shaft, and a deflated pantomime horse among numerous curious offerings. For once the French are genuinely impressed, less by the work, than by the fact it is there at all. "The boom is really about people trying new things, artists taking risks, not waiting for a big gallery to choose them like in Paris," says Gail. "Brit Art is funny. We're tired of intellectualism."



Robert, Cecile, Marc and Gail took in a spot of le shopping, lunch at Quo Vadis ("In France we prefer to eat our cows") and an appointment at the Ministry of Sound ("It's like Euro Disney") before catching Eurostar home

Why talk about existentialism when you're worried about losing your job?"

2pm, Bluebird Restaurant
Brit Art's fame may not yet have spread to Paris, but Sir Terence Conran's certainly has. The Conran-ising of London continues apace with his latest venture, the 240-seater Bluebird Restaurant on the King's Road in Chelsea, where we arrive for lunch.

"It's not so different from the Gare du Nord," says Robert, admiring the vast iron girders pinning up the cavernous interior of this former garage. It has the usual

Conran tricks — unassuming handsome waiters (in aprons which, the Parisians say, make them look like butchers), and acres of chrome. The menu, featuring "wood-roasted" more or less everything — pizza, rabbit, squab, even salad — is rapturously received, along with the house white.

Robert — who, in a former guise, reached the culinary heights of running a Tex-Mex restaurant off the Champs Elysees — puts our recent improvement in cooking down to our fabulously unremarkable past: "The British don't have any cultural constraints on food, so they can take a bit of this and that and mix it. In France there is always the weight of tradition."

He is not so sure about the giant food hall downstairs. Though inspired by French markets, it has dispiritingly chic Chelsea prices. Marc, however, is in heaven, and has to be wrestled from the cold counter where he is already on



Robert, Cecile, Marc and Gail took in a spot of le shopping, lunch at Quo Vadis ("In France we prefer to eat our cows") and an appointment at the Ministry of Sound ("It's like Euro Disney") before catching Eurostar home

first-name terms with Max, keeper of the cheese.

By now, we are far too tired to appreciate the King's Road as we know we should and shuffle up to Sloane Street and Harvey Nichols for a last burst of le shopping.

5pm, The End
We are still arguing over every twitch of the cultural swingometer as we arrive back at Waterloo, and collapse.

gratefully into a pub to wait for the train back to Paris.

Marc looks deep into his pint of Murphy's before announcing his considered verdict on the whole affair: "We still prefer New York for clothes and nightclubs. But your art is interesting and the food has definitely improved. Maybe London is somewhere between Paris and New York."

He pauses: "We'll wait until you have more cheese."

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How does Paris
measure up? A
British family
investigates

Travel, page 15

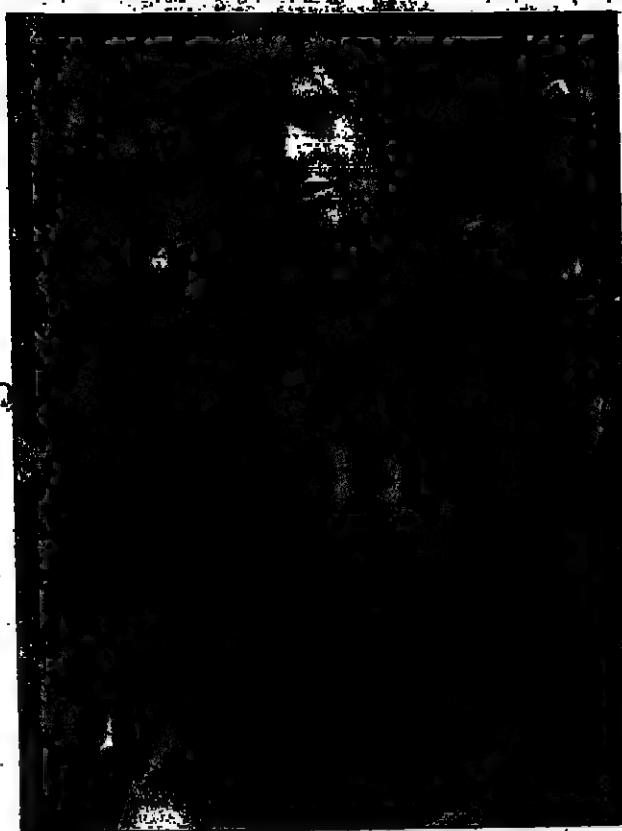
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WEEKEND • SATURDAY JULY 5/1997

Menswear takes a hike



Cherry and navy fleec jacket with detachable hood, £85, Karimori, 3 Southampton Street, WC2 (01254 385911). Mustard jeans, £50, Urban Stone, Netherjacks (0181-961 5588).



Cream MC rubber jacket with zip top, £119.99, Quicksilver, Harrods, Knightsbridge, SW1 (0171-287 2039). Navy and cream zip knit top, £85, Indigo Jeans, £25, Replay, 52-54 Long Acre, WC2 (0171-287 5832). Leather walking boots, £59.99, Elkesa, from J.D. Sports, selected branches (0183-446 5956).



Navy T-shirt, £18.99; navy and white nylon jacket, £99.99, Kangol, from selected River Island branches nationwide (0171-487 4888).



Olive fleec, red-trim, hooded top, £71.99, Vans, from Cobra Sports, 41 Carnaby Street, W1 and selected branches nationwide (0181-877 9907). Dark blue round neck T-shirt, £18.99, Kangol, from selected River Island branches nationwide (0171-487 4888). Mustard woven jean-style trousers, £50, Urban Stone, Netherjacks, 40 Fife Road, Kingston, southwest London (0181-961 5588). Olive suede trainers, £59.99, Kangol, as before.

THREE IN A KIND

Driving shoes are comfortable, practical and look good too. Here is a clutch of our favourites. H.B.

Pale green driving shoes, £170, J.P. Todds, Harrods, SW1 (0171-730 1234).

Tan driving shoes, £29.95, Vivaldi, Debenhams, W1 and major stores (0171-635 2002).

Dark grey driving shoes, £85.50, Russell & Bromley, 24-25 New Bond Street, W1 and selected branches nationwide (0171-629 6903).

Photos: Richard Bunn, (opposite) Sally Connors for Jorjaneord (0171-485 7774). Styling: Amanda Upfal

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Heath Brown on the outdoors look as urban streetwear

Who would have thought that a country ramble or a spot of hiking could turn into a fashion show? The trend began in the early Nineties when brighter colours and design-conscious outfits were created for skiers and snowboarders, always the sporty posers. The rest of the outdoors brigade, once ridiculed as "anoraks", decided to demand stylish gear too. Out went the trusty stodge-coloured kagool and in came branded clothing in fluorescent hues. They not only looked good, they also fulfilled their function.

"New colours, fabrics and technologies have come into vogue, and all the outdoor pursuits companies have to keep up with the competition and trends, progressively producing new styles," says Robert Bruce, product manager at Karimori.

And thanks to the recent proliferation of "dangerous sports" the outdoors look has become so stylish it has filtered into urban streetwear. It appeals to men who want to look as if they're prepared for the great outdoors even though they wouldn't venture further than the car park.

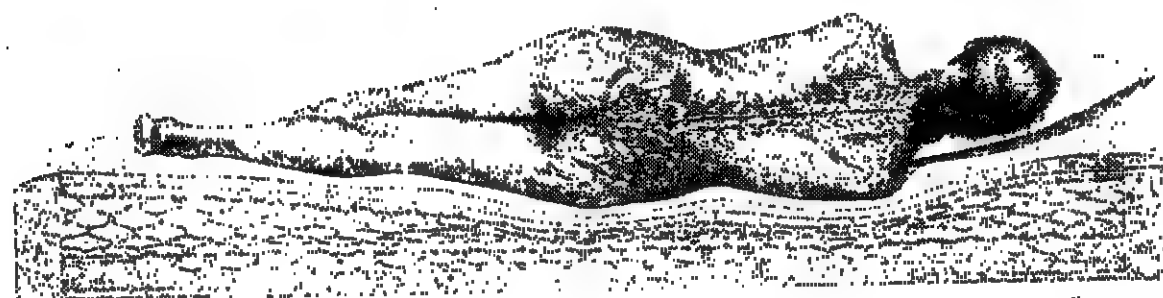
Sporty rainproof jackets, loose zipped anoraks, hooded fleecy tops in modern colours, patch-pocketed ramblers' trousers and chunky hiker-type boots are adopted by all kinds every Saturday morning on every high street.

However, the best fleec jacket, high-tech waterproof coat and walking boots that allow your feet to breathe are among the must-haves for the true urban adventurer. No wonder fashion names such as Next, Kangol and Replay have mimicked more authentic labels such as Berghaus, Karimori and Helly-Hansen. But bear in mind that the fashion garments are not as durable as the real thing.

"It may be a sportswear look but it is not true performance clothing," says Mo Khan of Kangol. "It is made for the urban guy who wants pukka quality, but with a cutting streetwise edge."

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During the month of July DUXIANA stores in the UK will be holding their Summer Sale, please contact your local store for further details.

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Duxiana, 11 Upper High Street, Winchester, Hampshire, SO23 8UT. Tel: 01962 877766. (Closed Mondays.)

Duxiana, 4 Montpellier Gardens Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG1 2TF Tel: 01423 506603 (Beside the Drum and Monkey Restaurant)

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GARDENER'S UPDATE



JANE OWEN

RAJ TENT CLUB sells the world's most exotic garden pavilions, with a climatic range from Scandinavia to the Caribbean. They are gorgeously exotic canvas, cotton and silk rooms based on the traditional tents of Rajasthan, made in the Indian province but adapted for modern life. "We use all the local skills of Rajasthan, from woodblock printing to carpentry, embroidery and tassel-making," says Clarissa Mitchell, the founder of the company. Ms Mitchell's work will be familiar to anybody who saw the Mughal Garden sponsored by the Maharajah of Jodhpur at the Chelsea Flower Show this year. A blue-and-white pavilion that she designed stood at the back of a formal garden based on the garden of the Taj. It sold for £6,500 including the drapes, blinds and floor-cushions, and is now pitched beside the sea in a Mughal garden in Kuwait. The company's standard tents range from a two-metre-square, scalloped-edge, lined pergola for £385 to its most popular item, an octagonal pavilion 13ft in diameter (£1,500) to grand marquees for £25,000.

● Raj Tent Club, 61 Kensington Park Road, London W11 3BU (0171-221 4273; fax 0171-965 3803).

In a glass of its own

THOSE who have swum through the "jungle pool" area of Center Parcs in the middle of winter will be aware of the heat efficiency of the vast glass dome which encloses the swimming area. It is made from a type of Pilkington glass, coated with an ultra-thin layer of metal, which lets in shortwave radiation from the sun yet retains longwave radiation from fires inside. A form of this glass is now available for conservatories, and Pilkington claims that it offers 30 per cent better insulation than double glazing. For more information call 0800 556000.

Webbed feat

THE INTERNET site www.gardening-uk.com is designed to take the strain out of armchair plant-hunting. Instead of having to find an appropriate nursery by browsing through the *Plant Finder* or magazines, you access the web site, which lists a range of catalogues which can then be ordered via your home computer — so there is no need to ring or write. William Wallace, who started the web site, used to run a conifer nursery. He is planning to add land-

scaping companies, garden equipment manufacturers and a list of gardening books to his site. For information, ring 01403 804707.

To my mind, the *RHS Plant Finder* is still the best investment for gardeners, even if it is slightly more long-winded than doing it the web site way. It lists 70,000 plants and where to buy them. *RHS Plant Finder 1997-98* is published by Dorling Kindersley at £12.99, and is also available on CD-Rom.

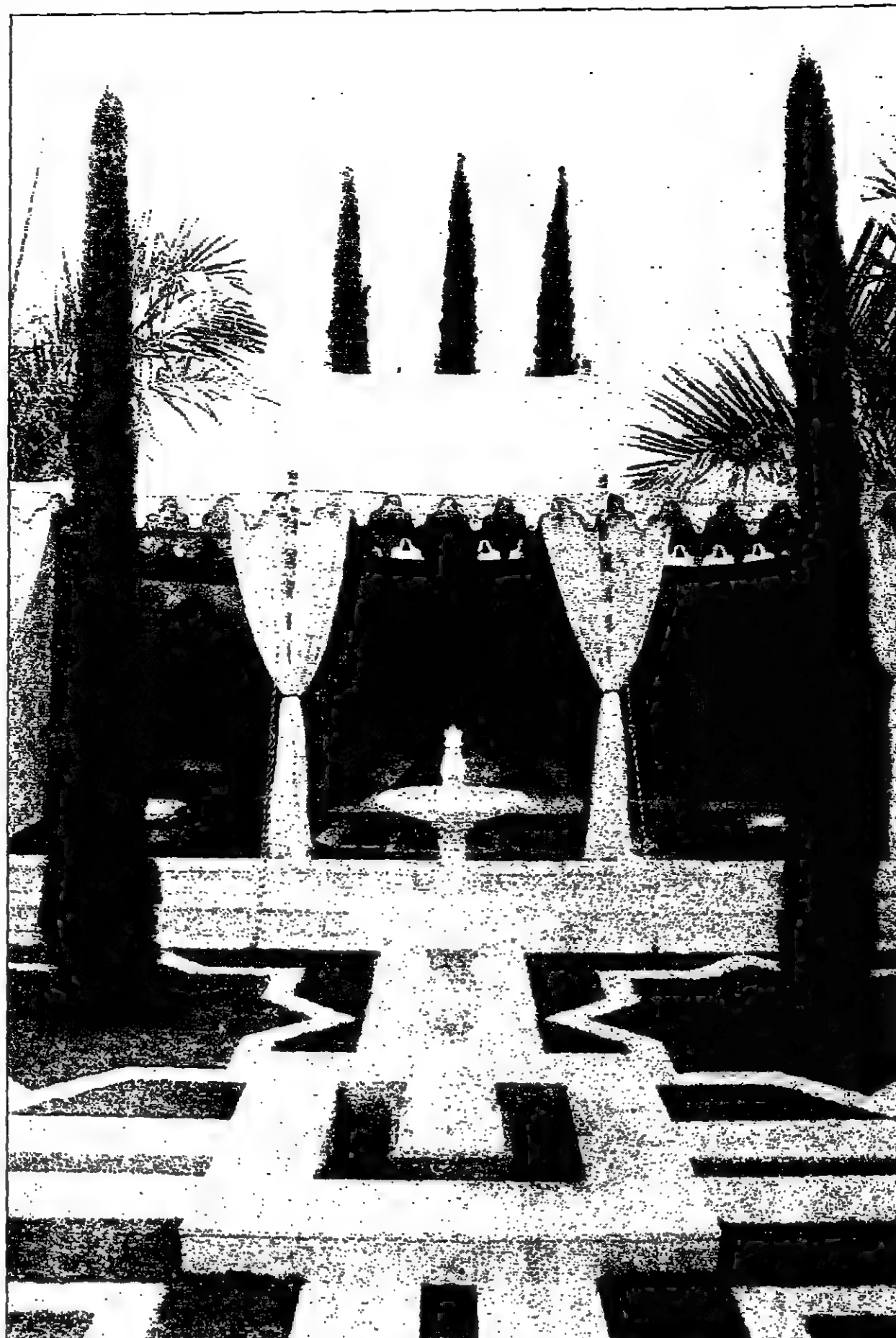
Exotic, aye

Logan Botanic Garden bills itself as the most exotic in Scotland, so its managers are running a "fire and spice" tour of the walled garden on Wednesday, July 9, at 11am to display perennials from the southern hemisphere.

For more information contact Logan Botanic Garden, Port Logan, Wigtownshire DG9 9ND (01776 860231).

Palace view

STEPHEN ANDERTON, the *Times* gardener, is a master of wild gardening. He will be sharing his expertise at Waddesdon Manor in Buckinghamshire at a "special interest day" on September 10. Waddesdon, built in 1874, is surrounded by informal and formal landscapes. The day will focus on The Dairy, a



Perfect for an Indian summer: the Raj Tent Club creates canvas, silk and cotton garden palaces for the discerning

water garden normally closed to the public. The day costs £55 a person and includes lunch, coffee and tea. Call 01296 651236.

Dock leaves

THE South East Garden Festival runs from August 1-3 at the Historic Dockyard, Chatham, Kent. It will feature the usual delights from specialist nursery stalls, including miniature roses, cacti, perennials and bonsai. Tickets are £5 (children £3), opening hours 9am-6pm. Parking is free. Motorists should leave the M20 at Junction 6, trains depart from Charing Cross

and Victoria. For further information on the festival, ring 01795 844939.

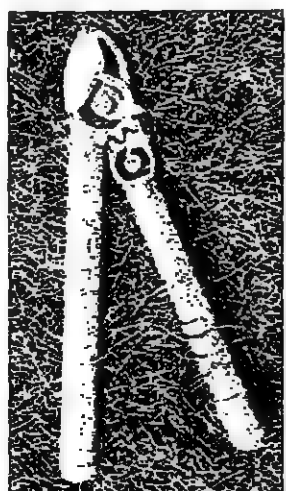
Run wild

PLANTLIFE is currently buying wildflower meadows in order to preserve these important habitats. Annual membership is £19. For further information contact the Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD (0171-938 9111).

THE telephone number for the Herb Society (Weekend, June 29) is 0171-823 5583. Senior citizens' membership is £17.50.

FIND OF THE MONTH

SINCE last autumn I have had to do much pruning and chopping back of overgrown roses, rosemary, lavender, lavatera, fruit trees and hay. The job has been transformed by a Wilkinson Sword two-handed pruner/light looper. Although two-handed, these are very light and strong, the blades do not stick and they seem to bite through the toughest shrub or small tree branch. Only one of the blades is metal, the rest of the tool is made from a plastic/fibreglass compound. RRP £19.99. Telephone 01956 65595 for nearest stockist.



The two-handed pruner



Hosta 'Devon Green'

PLANT OF THE MONTH

HOSTA 'Devon Green' is a vigorous plant, dark grey-green and reasonably slug-proof. The heart-shaped leaves reach about 18cm, and pale mauve flowers appear at midsummer. It forms pleasing domes of compact foliage. It can be seen at the National Collection of Hostas, Cleave House, Sticklepath, Okehampton, Devon. Private visits to the collection are welcome until the end of October only by telephoning ahead on 01857 840481 to Ann and Roger Bowden, who first introduced H. 'Devon Green' to this country.

BARGAIN OF THE MONTH 1

POSTCODE plants is a free scheme that tells you which native plants thrive in your area. Write to the charity Flora for Fauna and it will send you a five or six-page list of the plants and animals historically native — ie, some of them may no longer be there. It is part of the scheme by Jill, Duchess of Hamilton, to promote English plants for English Gardens.

"I had no idea so many people would

be interested. Two thousand have written for their postcard plants since the Chelsea Flower Show in May," the Duchess says. "Our database, which is part of a joint project with the Natural History Society, is still in the development stage, so we welcome any written criticisms or corrections."

Those interested in the scheme should write on a postcard, with their address, to: Flora for Fauna, c/o Linnean Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1V 0LQ.

BARGAIN OF THE MONTH 2

THERE are 500 bottles of Liquid Biotol, the organic slime-busting treatment for grass clippings, going free. The first 500 readers to send postcards, with their names and addresses, to Liquid Biotol offer, Cheryl Hill Communications, 30 New Road, Leeds LS19 7SE will receive the product. Please state if you do not want further information from the companies involved.

A pilgrimage to Canterbury

■ Goodnestone Park, Canterbury, Kent (01304 840107)

Signed off B2146, either from A2 at Barham or from A25 at Wingham. Open, Mon, Wed-Fri, 11am-5pm. Sun noon-6pm. £2.50, under-12s 50p.

Shortly after walking into the garden, dawdle along the fine terraces in front of the house and watch a game of cricket in the park, or head for the far side to admire the guarded trunk of an ancient sweet chestnut. There is a long lime avenue beyond the

amphitheatre of lawns to the west, planned in 1954. To one side of this, a fast-maturing arboretum of ornamental trees is divided from a woodland garden by tall hornbeam hedges. In the walled garden, old brick walls enclose a series of interlinking sections, with a long central vista down to the church tower.

If you are looking for somewhere to travel on to, today (noon-6pm) and tomorrow (11am-5pm) is the garden festival at Wye College near

Ashford, the horticultural college of London University.

■ Lake House, Northampton, Alresford, Hampshire (01962 734820) Off B2046, 4m north of Alresford, follow signs for The Grange. Open: tomorrow 11am-5pm, £2.50, children free.

Lake House, in the Candover valley deep in rural Hampshire, stands in the walled kitchen garden of an old family home. The Grange is

arguably the most important neo-Grecian house in England. Its shell is now preserved by English Heritage and the ghostly but magnificent facade enriches many of the views visitors can enjoy.

The landscaped park with lakes, a cascade and immaculately planted woodland was obviously created for the Grange, and makes a delightful contrast to Lake House and its more recently created garden setting, which includes a superb kitchen garden.

GEORGE PLUMPTRE

GARDEN ANSWERS



STEPHEN ANDERTON
replies to readers' letters

Q We have just moved into a cottage which has been uninhabited for five years. The garden is riddled with ground elder, nettles and brambles, with a "lawn" of rough grass. How do we create a nice lawn, and a space for the dog and baby to play in? We have tried dog/baby-friendly weedkillers which worked for ten days, then everything sprouted again. — S. Gadras, Kings Langley, Herts.

A Forget weedkillers for a while. Hire a mower suitable for rough areas, such as a flail mower, and hack down the area, you expect to be lawn. Scythe it down or trim it, if you prefer. Rake it off, then just keep mowing it. You will be amazed how soon you get a green and even surface. In cultivated areas, though, you may well need to resort to weedkillers.

Q Last October I moved a 6ft firethorn (*pyracantha*) a few years old to another position. Leaves have been produced about 9in up the stem, but no further. Should I saw off the upper growth? — B.A. Reece, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands.

A Saw it off at 9in. Mature *pyracantha*s do not like being moved. Like thorns and hollies,

they develop a questing, warty root system which you can never move intact. However, at least yours is alive and with a good mulch of manure or compost and regular watering, it should be tall again in two years.

Q Last autumn I planted *Campanula carpatica* in the garden. It never thrived and eventually died. I found a dozen yellow spherical objects a few millimetres across in the soil. They crunched like eggshells, spurring a fluid with some force when pressed. What were they, did they kill the plant, did they come with the plant and will they spread? — R.N. Hinchliffe, Leeds.

A Have no worries. These are just the spent cases of encapsulated slow-release fertiliser. Nurserymen mix them into their composts to ensure that plants have a constant supply of food over a set number of days. *C. carpatica* is not the easiest of plants to grow and needs good drainage and air movement. It may have died of a wet, peaty compost.

● Write to Garden Answers, Weekend, The Times, 1, Pall Mall East, London W1K 6AL. Advice is offered without legal responsibility. The Times regrets that any enclosures cannot be returned.

WEEKEND TIPS

- Dead-head peonies and delphiniums as necessary. Remove the spent flowers on peonies, argemone and anemones. Break flowered stems on clumps of pinks off at the base.
- Strawberry runners may be pegged down with a piece of wire now, to produce extra plants.
- Earth up potatoes. A heavy watering will quickly boost the yield of earlies in dry areas. Continue to plant for successional cropping.
- Take 2in tip cuttings under polythene of easy shrubs such as *Philadelphus* and *Potentilla*.

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Built in 1977 and extremely well maintained, this house has 145 sq m on 3 levels, a very landscaped plot of 2450 sq m, stands 295 metres above sea level, and has almost uninterrupted 360 degree panoramic views of the bay of Agay, the Estadi mountains and St Tropez in the far distance.
3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms.
Reception room, dining room, big kitchen, semi-outdoor room, big combined hall with reception room, bedrooms, bathroom, kitchenette, swimming pool, 2 terraces, Agay double garage, store, cellar.
Ref 008
Freehold FF \$5.8 million

Moupin
Close to Sophia Antipolis and the golf courses in a quiet location at the end of a cul-de-sac, this villa was built in 1987. It is situated on a nearly flat plot of 2500m², has 230m² on two levels and a basement offering a further 200m². 4 beds, 3 baths, huge sitting room, dining room, kitchen, hall, guest cloakroom. On the lower level: bedroom and shower, garage, vest, billiard/TV room, large terrace. Swimming pool, Petanque pit, and in a corner of the garden a summer sitting room and dining room next to an open air stone barbecue. Tel 070
Freehold FF 4.25 million

On the Lakeshore No buildings in front. Set in 1370's, 4+ acres with a rock formation, thus having 2 ground floors. This house has been used as a live-and-work unit. In excess of 3500^{sq} ft. b.s., starting from street level: 2 garages, wine cellar, boiler room, 1st floor; 3 offices and a workshop. 2nd floor: antique and double height reception room, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 2nd floor terrace, summer poolside room, terrace and garden. 3rd floor: 3 beds with en-suite bath. Mezzanine over the reception below, library room, garden. Part of the roof is laid out as a terrace. Lift to all floors. This house needs redevelopment but also offers flexibility. *See also*

Agony
A house on the Riviera for less than \$185,000? YES!
A very nicely designed house of 1380 sq. ft. on 2 floors in the prime, quiet "Domaine du Puy" on a cul-de-sac of 13 homes, one block from the sea. Good views of the Esterel mountains and the sea towards St. Tropez. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, dressing room, sitting room, living room, kitchen, quiet cloisters, study, terrace, swimming pool and garden with a swimming pool and a tennis court. The house is a little tired, it needs paint, but is nonetheless immediately habitable. Ref 689
Freehold FF 1.88 million

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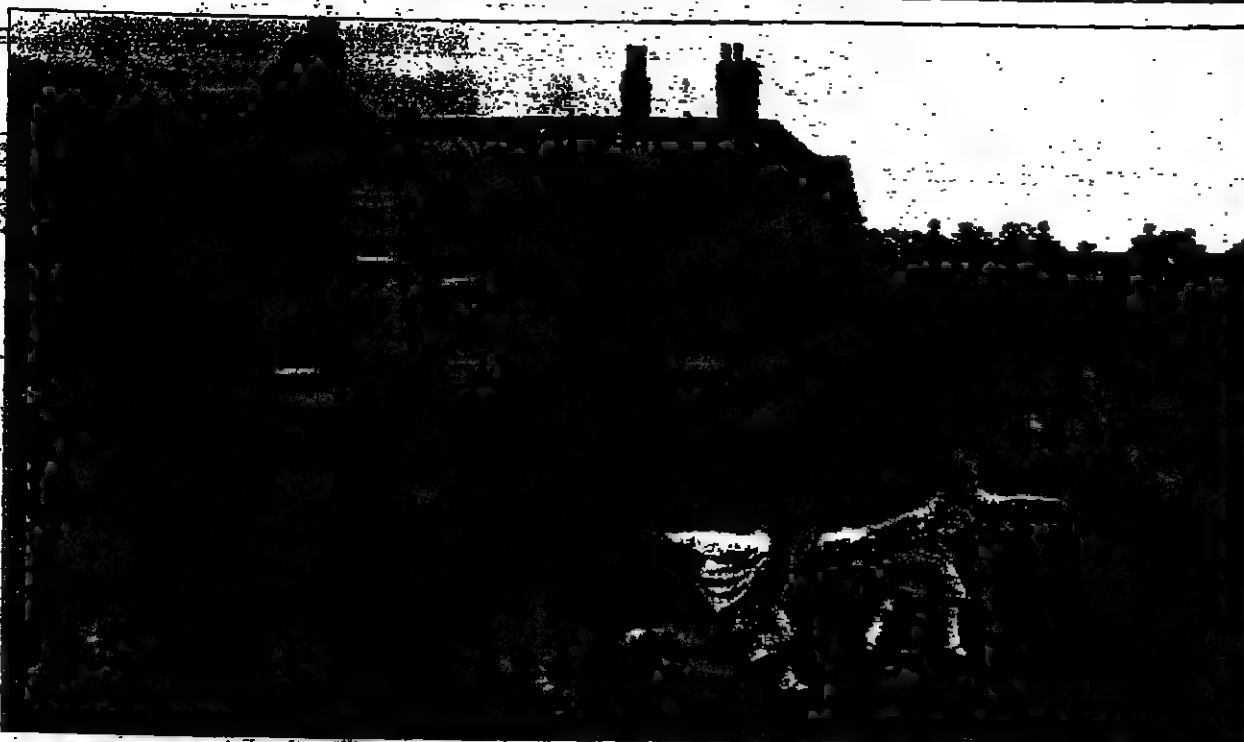
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A prep school in Kent closes today and is up for sale. It would suit someone with an extremely large family. Katherine Bergen suggests



Children of Sibton Park School play at the rear of the main house (left). Needlework lessons in the long drawing room (right), the only part of the private dwelling used by the pupils, and (below) the main façade of the Grade II listed house



House with a touch of class

It was sports day when I visited Sibton Park prep school near Ashford in Kent. A lady in the corridor, surrounded by a gaggle of girls, was dispensing ice-cream from a tub to outstretched cones. As I looked on longingly, a little voice piped up, "you can't have any". It emanated, at midriff level, from a small girl who giggled at me as she demolished her cone and trotted off to play rounders.

The school — like Dians, Princess of Wales's alma mater West Heath — is for sale. After 59 years as a school, the property is being sold by the same family; numbers of pupils have fallen and after this term they leave for good.

The present owner's grandmother founded the school in 1948, running it from her own home. The school is now run by her granddaughter and her husband, Penelope and Charles Blackwell. Mrs Blackwell proudly picks out the famous old girls from among hundreds of faces in the school photographs. Caroline Langrish, the actress, and Princess Alice of Jordan spent their schooldays here as did the proprietor herself and her children are there now.

Although the property is cluttered with school paraphernalia — endearing pictures and poems plaster the walls — the main house, which is Grade II listed and built in 1600, has largely remained a private home. The family lives here and, except for excursions into the long drawing room for needlework, the pupils use the 19th-century wing and added classrooms.

But if the concert hall fell down, there would be no difficulty in accommodating the entire school in this room. It is 53 ft long and 20 ft wide. Oak-panelled walls offer two stone fireplaces. Another fireplace, in the smaller drawing room next door, is dated 1602.

For all their grandeur, these rooms do still show the effects of ever-present children. Even the impressive crimson dining room is home to a large number of saddles which are currently stored here after some burglaries at the stables.

The house is certainly in need of some renovation. Although the roof has been re-leaded, interior ceilings show signs of previous damage. Upstairs, the principal bedrooms are beamed but, uncharacteristically, have high ceilings.

But it is the further 16 bedrooms which warm the heart. Forty boarders are accommodated in these, in pretty white wrought iron beds. Each room reveals a variety of teddies and other furry animals and each cupboard houses the pastel colours of the



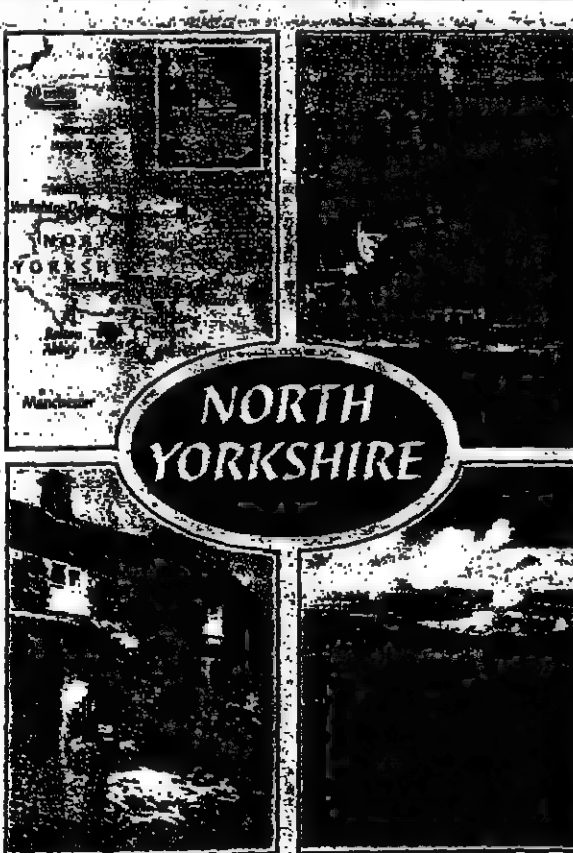
HOUSE OF THE WEEK

Sibton Park, nr Ashford, Kent. • Price: offers in the region of £350,000. Should be little difficulty converting back to private dwelling. • Transport: Channel Tunnel five miles away and Dover 15 miles away. Ashford station has fast services to London (70 minutes) and Eurostar services to Paris and Brussels. • Entertainment: racing at Folkestone, cricket at Canterbury, golf at Sandwich, sailing, angling. • Advantages: New owners will be able to make as much noise as they like as nothing will compare to the decibel level of dozens of little girls at play. • Disadvantages: Old girls forever turning up on the door step to have a look at their old school.

leads into a walled rose garden and a gaze from here to the kitchen garden and tennis courts. Nearby, a heated swimming pool is screened off by a high hedge, and there is a riding school with stabling for 17 ponies. The gardens are beautifully kept and amount to 43 acres including the parkland. An adjacent farm with 146 acres, also owned by the family, is for sale too.

It is difficult to imagine this house without the children and almost as hard to imagine the pet area bereft of all the rabbits and guinea pigs. It is said that the school trophies for trampolining and riding will be engraved for the last time. One of the reasons that this is an appealing school is because it is arranged around a real home. The "homely" atmosphere that all schools strive for is here.

PROPERTY PROFILE: NORTH YORKSHIRE



A weekly look at the property market around Britain

Attractions: Boasting two National Parks, in the Yorkshire Dales and the North York Moors, as well as historic York, Castle Howard, Bolton Abbey and Rievaulx, North Yorkshire also caters for bucket and spades, around Whitby and Scarborough. The county also lures locomotive aficionados, with the North York Moors Railway from Pickering to Grosmont, while the east coast InterCity service takes only one and three quarter hours from York to London. Property hotspots are within the York, Harrogate and Leeds (over the border) triangle.

The market: Warm, according to Clegg Kennedy Drew in Hovingham. They estimate prices have risen by between 5 and 8 per cent in the past year, and that the number of cash buyers has increased. Savills in York finds that demand outweighs supply for prime properties. The market in the region reached its peak in 1990, says Savills, but fell by about 23 per cent between 1991 and December 1992. Recovery began last year, although prices are still 5 per cent below previous highs.

Expect to pay: Three-bedroom cottages are going for £100,000 to £140,000; traditional farmhouses from £200,000 to £300,000; and medium-size country houses from £400,000 to £500,000, according to Savills. The majority of buyers are from within the area, says Jackson-Stops & Staff in York, which has about three times more applicants now than this time last year, with many looking for village houses and old rectories.

Significant sales: Lead Hall, a 19th-century former farmhouse at Saxton, near Tadcaster, attracted about 100 viewers in two weeks; and joint agents Jackson-Stops & Staff and Lane Fox received 12 offers, selling "handsomely" in excess of its £225,000 guide price. The house is near to the site of the battle of Towton, where 38,000 soldiers fell during the War of the Roses.

Outlook: Promising — Fimberts reckons supply will increase, taking the heat out of the market. Jackson-Stops & Staff says the upturn will continue, but also expects supply to improve.

AMANDA LOOSE

Next week's property profile: Wiltshire

Cutting a dash with pebble mosaics

When people stumble across the pebble mosaic outside Rod and Anna Dalrymple's house they are amazed the couple did not make it themselves.

"It's not the sort of thing they imagine you can commission people to do," Mr Dalrymple says. The sentiment is fully justified because those who make pebble mosaics for a living appear to be pretty thin on the ground.

The visual arts information service, Axis, has 2,000 names on its database (the National Artists' Register), but has no body listed in this particular area, while the Crafts Council has just one name, Maggie Howarth.

In fact it was Mrs Howarth who made the mosaic for the Dalrymples. They first saw her work two years ago in a garden at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery in Edinburgh and later someone lent them her book, *The Art of Pebble Mosaics*. In the end the couple decided to commission Mrs Howarth to do the work.

On Mrs Howarth's first visit to the Dalrymples' Georgian rectory she measured up and took pictures of the area outside the front door where the abstract mosaic was to be placed to complement the daylight over the door. Mrs Howarth made the one-metre square piece, in sections, at her Lancashire workshops.

The pebbles are gathered from seashores, riverbeds and quarries all over the country, in what is back-breaking, labour intensive work. Recently, Mrs Howarth made a 400-mile journey to Scotland for a two-day collecting expedition with her assistant, Mark Currie.

"However, she points out that you cannot simply search wherever you like, or take any pebbles you might find. Permission for access and to remove any stones must be granted by the owner of the

A craft that began with the Greeks has been revived to brighten parks and pavements

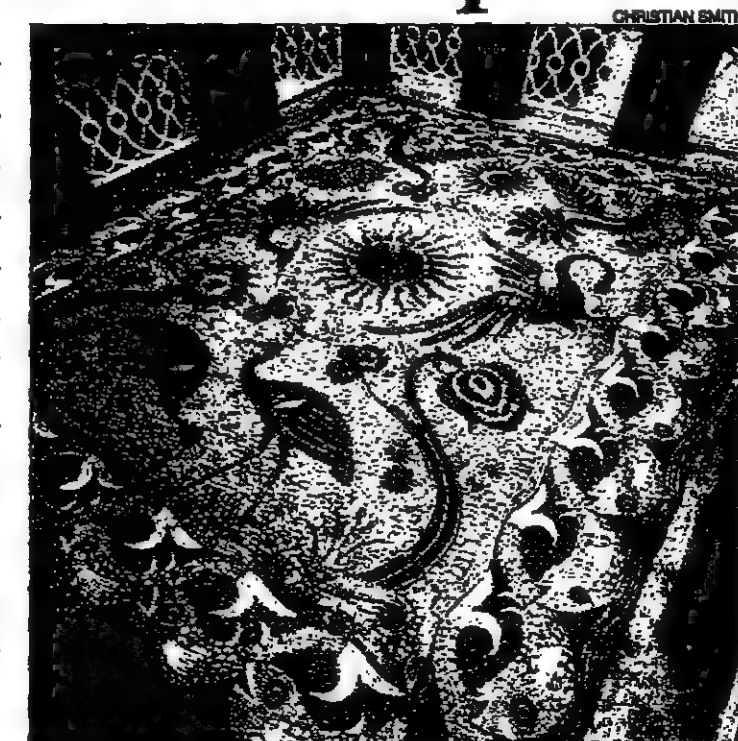
land and ecologically sensitive areas should be avoided. Back at Mrs Howarth's workshops, the pebbles — black, white, red, brown, green and grey — are sorted into large wooden trays, so heavy they have to be lifted with a fork-lift truck.

The pebbles are put face down in a mould and then sand worked around them. Next a layer of grout is poured in to fill the gaps between the pebbles and finally concrete is poured in. After hardening the mould is turned over and the sections — five in the case of the Dalrymples' mosaic — are joined together like a jigsaw. The join cannot be seen.

Pebble mosaic goes back centuries and is still practised in several Mediterranean countries. The ancient Greeks made floors from pebbles, and the Chinese, the Moors in Spain and Renaissance designers in Italy extended the idea to the garden.

It was while redesigning her own cottage garden 15 years ago that Mrs Howarth first experimented with pebbles, following a tradition of fine cobblework that she had observed in nearby towns and villages.

"Before long I realised the possibilities of the medium, not only as a garden ornament but as a way of making decorative pavements to help alleviate some of the boredom of modern townscapes."



centres, hospitals, schools, parks, conservatories and sites outside private homes. One couple chose a bird design for their garden because they loved birdwatching, a butcher wanted a sheep and a cow on the pavement outside his shop, another family wanted a "Tree of Life" to celebrate the birth of a child.

Mrs Howarth has just completed a water feature for Bradford City Centre and is working on a mosaic for the Dunblane Memorial Gardens with her husband, Boris, a letter carver.

Another commission is for Lytham St Anne's, her 50 sq metre design incorporating windmills, trees, fish and the Lancashire rose. Her ambition is to do a major piece for the millennium.

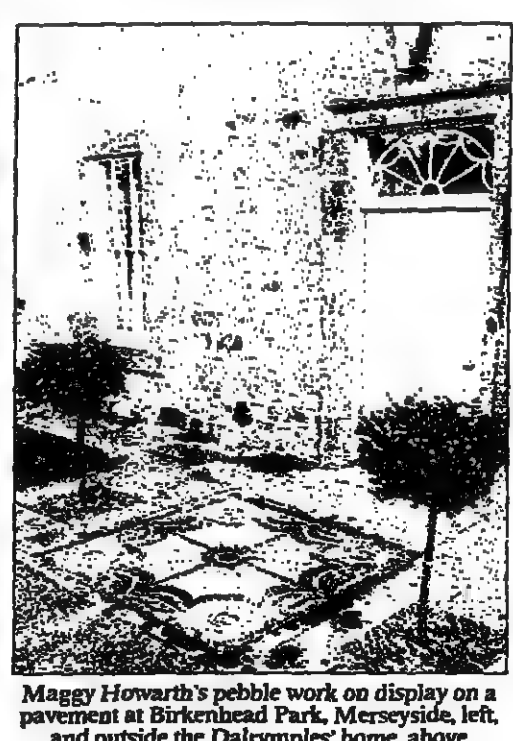
Commissions are almost always exclusively designed. However, Mrs Howarth does

have seven small "off-the-shelf" pebble mosaics for the garden. They range in price from £238 plus £50 delivery for a swallow motif to £655 plus £50 delivery for an exotic bird design that is over a metre in diameter. The cost of a commissioned piece starts from about £800.

"Most people don't think the mosaics are expensive. We put a lot of effort into selecting the stones and getting the detail right. And they will last for a very long time," Mrs Howarth says.

CHRISTIAN DYMOND

• Maggie Howarth (Cobblestone Designs) 015342 74204
• The Art of Pebble Mosaics, by Maggie Howarth, Search Press, Welwood, North Farm Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 3DR. Freephone 0800 146660. Price £11.95, post free.
• Axis 0113 2833125.
• The Crafts Council reference desk 0171 806 2501.



Maggie Howarth's pebble work on display on a pavement at Birkenhead Park, Merseyside, left, and outside the Dalrymples' home, above

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Postcodes from the edge

If a home in that smart area is beyond your means, keep on down the road, says Amanda Loose

Mention Buckinghamshire to house hunters and they may well wax lyrical about the lure of the Chiltern village of Hambleden. Say Gloucestershire and they will probably focus on the Cotswolds. Cheshire prompts thoughts of Cheshire or Chester, while if Surrey is their destination, the target area is likely to be somewhere near Guildford.

In London, certain fashionable areas are known as "golden postcodes" because the number of prospective buyers easily exceeds the number of available properties in them. This means inflated prices and, inevitably, disappointment for many house hunters.

The answer to finding a property you like and can afford, estate agents say, is to be more open-minded from the outset. "Often, if buyers looked 30 minutes down the road from their chosen area, they would have a good chance of finding something they liked at a manageable price," says John Husband of Humbers.

"When people first start looking for a property, they have a fixed idea of where they want to live, what they want to buy and how much they want to spend," says Ivor Dickinson of Douglas & Gordon. "Buyers often call our Fulham office in London and say they will not consider living anywhere else. Yet more than 30 per cent of these people will eventually buy in a different area, such as Battersea or Clapham, which they originally considered a non-starter."

Looking further than fashionable areas and the "golden postcodes", or just beyond the "acceptable" hour's commuting time from your place of work, can often reap benefits and savings without severely compromising your notion of the ideal home or forsaking attractive countryside.

Peter Wilde of Compass Relocation in Peterborough, whose clients have often narrowed their target area to just three or four villages, says: "We explain to buyers the difficulty of achieving the desired result and offer a range of alternatives. In most cases they will consider the wider options, particularly if they are keen to buy a house quickly."

The essential thing is to research



your chosen area carefully. Always take advice from an agent with good local knowledge and try to get an overall feel for the place.

Subtle boundaries can sometimes separate the affordable from the out-of-your-range. Jonathan Drinkwater of Butler Sherborn in Tetbury, Gloucestershire, reckons that buyers can avoid a hefty premium by looking an extra 15 minutes down a major road or rail line — and cites the Leigh in Coaley, near Dursley, Gloucestershire, as a prime example. This Grade II* listed farmhouse, in need of some renovation, is for sale at £395,000; some 15 per cent less than it would cost in the nearby Cotswolds.

Christopher Dewe of Knight Frank says there is a "magical" line beyond which prices drop markedly as the commuting time to London reaches nearly two hours. In Surrey, Michael Parry-Jones of Browns in Guildford estimates that prices fall by 5-7 per cent for every two miles travelled from Guildford towards Farnham. The properties and countryside are

just as appealing, he says, but the train services are just not as good.

Farther south, Richard Willis of Henry Adams and Partners in Chichester, West Sussex, is selling the Old Parsonage at Sidesham, south of the A27, for about £325,000. Had it been in the Downs, just north of the A27, it would probably have cost at least £100,000 more.

Similarly, Jeremy Smallman of

BARGAIN AREAS

■ Kent: choose east rather than west, where properties can cost up to 30 per cent more, Clutton says.
■ Lincolnshire: the area around Grantham offers the best value, with large country houses going for about £365,000, says Savills.
■ Cambridgeshire: about 30 miles north of Cambridge, you can find a small mansion for about £295,000, according to Bidwells. Within five miles of the city, that price would be at least double.
■ Yorkshire: the best hunting-grounds are to the south and east of the A64, says Savills. Traditional period houses there cost about £30,000 less than in the north and west of the county.
■ Cumbria: look outside the Lake

than those on the east side, says Anthony Walker of Friend and Falcus. If you are lured by fashionable Notting Hill and Holland Park but stumped by the prices, try the Bayswater and Paddington fringes such as Westbourne Terrace or the north end of Ladbrooke Grove, says Mark Collier of Foxtons. A two-bedroom flat there will cost between £170,000 and £250,000. In Belgravia, north of Victoria station, a new house would go for between £400,000 and £500,000; in Primrose, just to the south, a more modest £300,000, says James Gubbins of Dymott. In north London, West Hampstead is a less expensive alternative to north after Hampstead village.

a downmarket name but beautiful countryside — and where you can get value for money.

Michael Parry-Jones of Browns in Guildford says: "I advise buyers to cover as many of their requirements as they can and, if they find six out of ten of their original ideals, they are doing well. Often the end result is very different from the original brief, but they end up happy."

FOR SALE

WATERFRONT HOUSES

DEVON
Lidstone, Dartmouth. Former boathouse converted into two apartments and a self-contained studio, with direct access to the river Dart, private landing stage, two running moorings and a covered slip for dinghy storage. Flat one has two en suite bedrooms, a drawing room with balcony, kitchen, dining room and cloakroom. The second has one bedroom, bathroom, living room, kitchen and workshop. About £350,000 (Fulford, 01392 412007).

HERTFORDSHIRE
Old Westmill Farm, Ickleford, Hitchin. A 17th-century Grade II listed farmhouse with 15 rooms in need of refurbishment, four-room cottage with stone and a walled garden, coach house with eight rooms and a studio, barns and stable block in three acres of gardens fronting the river Oughton. About £795,000 (Lane Fox, 01582 784343).

OXFORDSHIRE
Gaunt Mill, Standlake. Grade II listed period mill house in 23 acres of tranquil gardens and paddocks on the river Windrush. Three bedroom suites, three reception rooms, kitchen, conservatory and cloakroom. Cottage divided into two two-bedroom self-contained flats. About £885,000 (01585 790077).

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SURREY, Bramshot. Price Guide: £700,000
A sizeable and well-located house with detached bungalow & excellent equestrian facilities. 7 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, 4 reception rooms, kitchen, utility room, sun lounge, heated pool, double garage, garden & grounds. About 2.0 ha (5 acres).
FARNHAM: 01252 737115 J.S.A.: HAMPTONS INTERNATIONAL 01428 722031

BERKSHIRE, Hermitage. Price Guide: £260,000
A period house with a useful outbuilding, set in well stocked gardens on the edge of the village. 4 bedrooms, bathroom, 3 reception rooms, kitchen, garage, work room & gardens.
NEWBURY: 01635 523225

EATON SQUARE, SW1.
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Freehold

Price Guide: £399,950

WANDSWORTH: 0181-871 3033

HAMPSHIRE, North Waltham. Price Guide: £395,000
A pretty listed timber framed farmhouse in the village with about 0.8 ha (2 acres). 4 bedrooms, bathroom, shower room, 3 reception rooms, kitchen, conservatory, cloakroom, utility area, barn, playroom, stable, double garage, gardens & paddock.
WINCHESTER: 01662 863131

CHISWICK MALL, W4. Freehold Price Guide: £695,000
A well decorated Georgian style house in an attractive development with views over the Thames. 4/5 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 3 reception rooms, studio room/bed 5, kitchen, cloakroom, garage, on-street parking, roof terrace, garden & riverside communal garden.
KENSINGTON: 0171 727 0705

SURREY, Cooombe. Freehold Price Guide: £750,000
A detached farmhouse style house with a large southerly mature garden & indoor swimming pool. 6 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 3 reception rooms, playroom, cloakroom, 2 kitchens, utility room, 2 garages & parking for 6 cars.
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Hi, I'm Texan and I'm single

Scottish and Irish women, however, can hop on and off planes as

much else, and who are politely excluded from his tours. The rest, he says, are looking for happiness

Raymond Campbell, the operator of Scottish Sweetheart Tours, with Aileen, Clare, Libby and Linda, looking for Mr Right with some trepidation and scepticism

Despite their reservations, the three women are caving in fast. Far from being the pushy type we all expected, the Texan matchmaker blinks at us with mild brown eyes

and a half", the hard-nosed women are filling in forms detailing their hearts' desires and having their photographs taken for the catalogue — three Maureens yielding to

"There's something about this catalogue that's horribly wrong-footed," Libby says. "It's outmoded and outdated — as if they're coming to rescue us when we don't want to be rescued, as if we're counter-classes who won't be sophisticated enough to know any better. I'm not

about his vetting procedures and, after meeting him at a ball dance, the ladies declared him a client doomed to failure.

"We offered to arrange a social event if they came to Scotland," Raymond Campbell said he was offered a ratio of three women to one man.

terred. He says there is no shortage of men willing to fly half way across the world in order to find the woman they want. "I can't guarantee them a wife, but I can tell them that at a minimum they'll have a great vacation and make some good friends," he says.

Many pet owners are asking if their dogs and cats can survive on a meat-free diet. **Lottie Moggach** reports

products. A 10% per centum

The Vegan Society, promoters of vegetarian pet foods, believe that the image of dogs and cats as tamed wild animals, whose natural instincts are to kill their own food, is misleading. So domesticated are they that few traces remain of their ancestors' bloodlust.

The Pet Food Manufacturers' Association (PFMA)

When it comes to non-meat prepared foods the most important thing to remember, they say, is that dogs and cats are very different creatures, with individual dietary requirements. Dogs are physiologically similar to humans, in that they can derive essential vitamins from plants, so they

It is possible to provide artificial vitamin A and arachidonic acid; however, taurine has long been thought only to be found in animal products. But accord-

A Rhinitis is an inflammation of the lining of the nose. You are the best person to ask any questions, and my diagnosis — or p

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penosis —

DUKE is a neutered seven-year-old long-haired Jack Russell terrier who was brought to the centre because his owners could not devote enough time to him. He is an energetic, playful dog who would suit someone who is at home all day and who has no other pets or young children. Contact the RSPCA Blackberry Farm Animal Centre, Quantin, Bucks HP22 4RJ 01296 655723.

These alternative foods consist of chicken and beef flavoured TVP, or textured vegetable protein, and if your dog can be persuaded, they may well be worth a try. TVP has been proven to help with pancreatic and small intestine problems and skin disorders, and works out considerably cheaper than tinned food.

The main problem for owners, says Richard Farhall, is that Vegetal is only a supplement to a rather elaborate suggested menu — including nutritional yeast flakes, ground raw vegetable oil and so on.

Jane Staffieri, a vegan the past seven years, raised her three-year-old on Vegocat from a kitten. Having established his preferred meal — based on soy mince and rice — she makes batches every 12 days, and then adds Vegocat and fresh vegetables. "I wouldn't free-

wouldn't impose a vegetarian diet on an older cat who has been brought up a carnivore. "That is cruel. I am aware that cats probably prefer meat," says Vets' opinions on the issue are divided. David Johnson vouches for the "quality and adequacy" of the Vegemix while others do not believe that owners should impose

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'Explaining the facts of life is all fine and dandy in theory, but in practice the crucial difficulty is knowing how much detail to supply'

The serious business of sex

LIFE AND SOUL



GINNY DOUGARY

The details are hazy but the picture is still embarrassingly clear. We are playing ping-pong in my Mum and Dad's garage, listening to Hair on the tape recorder. The previous week my parents have been taken to see the musical by one of my father's racier business contacts and his wife. Since my father was very much a whisky rather than a weed man, this could have been a defining Sixties moment for him. But it was not to be. No sooner had a bare-chested hippy from the east handed him a flower and attempted to spread love — with my mother reluctantly in tow. I was about 12, and my friend — who had been a year or so older. To be sure, the talk against our bats, as we warble our way through the songs. "Wear it long, like Jesus wore it — Alleluia, don't you adore it? Share it... bare it... wear it... long, beautiful... hair!" This is the dawning of the age of Aquarius... "and then — I can't see my cheeks burning at the memory — Masturbation can be fun... join the holy orgy Kama Sutra

...everyone." To be sure, too. "What exactly is masturbation?" I ask. My parents didn't believe in furnishing me with the facts of life. "It wasn't the done thing in our day," my mother tells me when I ask her why. "We rather expected you to be telling us what it was all about." No chance of parents being so innocently unworldly these days. What with our middle-class angst and our child-centric culture, we couldn't possibly get away with being so casual about something as serious as sex. If I cast my mind further back to my childhood, we seemed to be at it all the time. Not "it" itself, of course, but a version of it nonetheless. Perhaps the desert heat was responsible for enflaming our nascent sexual selves. Perhaps it was the 1950s taboo about sex which gave our childish play such an irresistible charge. Whatever the reason, the boys

and girls I knew liked nothing better than "playing wilis", which usually took the conventional doctors and nurses form — mixing "poisons" to smear on "private parts" — but occasionally descended into a junior master-slave routine replete with bondage. Once, I remember, my mother summoned me into the living-room with my friend Justin and said that the cook had seen us "showing ourselves" to one another in the sand pit. What I can still recall absolutely, was the sense that she didn't really take it seriously and, indeed,

was struggling to retain some control over her rebellious features. I would be wise, I know, not to poke too much fun at this spectacle since it can only be a manner of time before I play my mother's role as I half-heartedly set about chastising one of my sons for an equally harmless misdemeanor. Our older son was five when he asked — out of the blue — "Mummy, what's sex?" Fortunately, I had prepared so thoroughly for every stage of parenthood at least half-a-dozen stages in advance (more anxiety), that I

had some idea of what to say. My bedside bible was Dr Hugh Jolly's *Book of Child Care*: "Don't ever put off the opportunity to talk about sex on the grounds that your child is 'too young to understand'," he advised in his deliciously firm but reassuring way. "If he is old enough to ask a question on any subject, he is old enough to be answered." This is all fine and dandy in theory, but in practice the crucial difficulty is knowing how much detail to supply — particularly when you are dealing with a mind of quite fearsome and persistent inquisitiveness. No way was our guy going to be palmed off with some nebulous story about sperm and eggs. Oh no. He wanted the nitty-gritty facts. "But how, Mum, does the man's sperm get to be anywhere near the woman's eggs?" So I told him and his eyes widened and he looked at his father and back at

his mother and — not surprisingly — giggled in disbelief. Since then his appetite for information has become voracious. But he seems markedly less babyish about the subject than most of the grown-up men who read *Landed*. It must be all that Latin terminology — no front-bottom and back-bottom stuff for us — and our ability to make sex sound as unexciting as possible. Sex nearly always seems to take you by surprise. His younger brother and I were reading a wholesomely educational book called *I Wonder Why My Tummy Rumbles*, when suddenly — and rather sneakily — the Facts of Life leapt out on the very last pages, just when you're feeling pleasantly yawnny, under the heading: "Where do I come from?" It was just as well the six-year-old was as tired as me, and did not seem particularly interested in exploring the answer. Just as well too, because later that night his older brother had a question for me. "Mum, what's a wanker?" Here we go again.

Why there's a school in my dining room

Would children learn better at home than at school? Emma Haughton finds more and more parents think so

The day a friend disclosed her plan to withdraw her six-year-old son from our local primary school to educate him at home with his two younger brothers, I thought it was mad, bad and dangerous: mad to have three boys under her feet all day, bad to risk them becoming socially isolated and withdrawn, and dangerous to attempt a curriculum that defeats many teachers. It conjured up nightmare visions of maladjusted child prodigies constantly chaperoned by their pushy and over-protective parents. According to Paula Turner, who teaches her four girls from their Birmingham home, mine was a common reaction. "We get an awful lot of criticism about home education," she says. "I must admit when I first heard about it, I thought it was rather weird and alternative. But when I had my last child and suddenly realised that someone else would be having my children for the best six hours of the day, I decided to look into it."

What she found was that home-schooling in the UK is quite legal; parents are simply required to provide an education appropriate to their child's age and abilities. (The LEA may do home inspections or ask for an outline of intended work.) Three years later Paula and Barrie — "Mr and Mrs Average" with no higher qualifications, as Paula describes themselves — haven't looked back. "We have her children, when she discussed her plans with Elizabeth and Georgina, they were ecstatic. I asked them what they'd miss about school and they said friends and tuck. They see friends after school, and we have a tuck shop at home." Days in the Turner household are evenly varied and relaxed. Although Paula aims for eight hours of formal education a week, she finds that freed from the constraints of a curriculum they often end up doing other things. "That's the beauty of it, you can go with the flow," she says. "Children learn faster if what they are taught is applied to everyday life. They can see better why they have to know things."

Paula describes her girls as happy and confident — "not being with their peer group for 30 hours a week takes the pressure off" — and her own life as tiring, but fulfilling. "Being a Christian, it's a lot easier teaching them from home. I was spending a lot of time juggling the values they came home with from school. I didn't like things like evolution being taught as fact, for instance, but there were also the playground attitudes, the look-after-number-one, kick-anyone-who-is-down sort of thing. I wanted to show them they could have better values." Family relationships, already good, have become closer. They have more time and more fun together; understand each other better; talk to each other more. "When the kids were at school they would ask us questions, and we wouldn't know whether our answers went over their heads or were too obvious. Now we're much more in tune with them."

Are there any drawbacks? "My ironing doesn't get done," she says, without much hint of regret. "There's not much time for housework, but it will still be there when they've grown up. You get it done eventually. Often the kids help, we work as a team: tidying up, vacuuming, hanging out the washing — after all, they're learning skills for life."

Paula and Barrie are not as unusual as they seem, but one of a growing number of parents choosing to educate their children at home. These parents aren't concerned with turning their child into a mathematical genius, but feel school stifles children's creativity and independence. Research, by Grace Llewellyn, a former US middle-school teacher, suggests they may be right. Examining entries in the US *Current Biography Yearbook*, covering people prominent in their fields, she found that about one in five had dropped out of school or had not had much formal schooling. In her new book, *The Teenage Liberation Handbook*, Llewellyn lists various alumni from the school of life — William Blake, Charles Dickens, Henry Ford, George Gershwin, John Houston, Mozart, David Putnam, to name but a few — and concludes that school actually inhibits rather than fosters the learning process. Judith, 33, who lives with her husband Colin and two boys, would be the first to agree. "I went to pretty good

private schools, but didn't get much out of them. I was bored to tears and unhappy most of the time. I didn't want my children to go through the kind of things I went through." Judith went to considerable lengths to keep her children out of school. Before converting their west London maisonette into flats, she got up before the boys to work in the family bakery, then spent all day with them before returning to baking after they had gone to bed. Even now she has little time to herself. "I could do with a bit more," she admits. "People say: 'How can you bear having them around you all the time?' Generally it's not a problem, but sometimes, like any mother, I've had enough at the end of a long day."

Louis, nearly eight, and Rupert, nearly six, are confident and secure, happy to join in their Saturday music class. "They are fearless around adults," says Judith. "They've not got that reverence for authority that school instils."

A local home-schooling club, where parents and children meet once a week, provides valuable social contact within a wide age-range — a more natural way to mix, she believes, than school, where children learn to despise those younger than themselves and live in fear of those older. Like Paula, Judith finds that studying one-to-one means her children achieve a lot in a short time, leaving days free for other activities. "You soon realise that children just learn," she says. "You just facilitate that, answering questions and making it easier for them to find things out. Hopefully they won't consider the whole process as something horrible that leads to exams."

For others, home education is a more temporary interlude than a permanent state. Pien and Bob educated Anna, 18, and Saskia, ten, at their north London home until they were ten and eight respectively. Pien, now chair of Education Otherwise, the home-schooling support group, could not reconcile herself to sending her daughter to school at the tender age of four. "It's far too early," she says. "If a child starts school and they're not ready for reading, all their creativity is channelled into that. They are stifled at school, they don't learn creativity in life."

Paula Turner teaches her children at home in Birmingham. "Children learn faster if what they are taught is applied to everyday life. They can see better why they have to know things"



Ruth Gledhill hears a strong Methodist message in a service designed for young people

Follow your conscience, not the crowd

ON OUR WAY in, everyone was invited to take a stone. At the front, a banner spelt out SOW, for Sense of Worship. The church was half-full with teenagers and children, uniformly dressed in jeans, sweat-shirts and trainers. I was the second oldest person there, and wondered if I was getting too old for church. SOW, a contemporary service held each month at Hucklecot Methodist Church, Gloucester, had travelled to one of Methodism's foundation stones, Wesley's chapel in the City of London, for a service that coincided with the start of the Methodist Conference at Westminster. At Hucklecot, imaginative use of traffic lights, chocolates, a fountain and a mirror ball have helped attract a growing congregation to church over the past two years. We had no mirror balls but there were tiny, coloured spotlights and central to the service was a "stone ritual". These services are rarely pre-ordained. Each month a planning

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SPIRITUAL HIGH: Godly, although slightly lacking in method. ★★★★★
AFTER-SERVICE CARE: Tea and sandwiches. ★★★★★



Discussions at the Wesley Chapel

group, which includes a computer analyst, an ordained minister and a television producer, begins by sitting down with a blank sheet of paper, "brainstorming" ideas and then producing a service. For ours, the theme was "I need a hero". In a "peace song" from the Philippines, we sang of tears from the heavens which were tears for the earth "that forgets how to bring seed

to life" while outside, in the wettest June for years, the heavens had actually stopped crying for a few hours. Then there was "the story of Bertie Balloon". A pink balloon was blown up as we were taken through Bertie's life — birth, fast-track career, bigger cars and bigger houses, marriage to a wife he rarely saw. Finally, on retirement, he went "pop" and disappeared. The message was clear

— materialism is wrong, don't strive for success, dare to be different — as if confirmation is in itself a sin. I wondered what John Wesley, who opened this chapel in 1778 and who urged his followers to work hard and save hard, would have made of this. In other respects, however, the message was good, in urging the youngsters to resist peer group pressure to smoke, drink and take drugs. "We are tempted to follow the crowd, even when we know it is wrong and our conscience is a still, small voice," the worship leader said during prayers. We were urged to contemplate our stones. "If you wish, you may place your stone at the foot of the cross as a sign that you take Jesus as your hero." Or, the leader said, we could take our burdens home with us. The youngsters laid them at the foot of the cross. The other adult there held on to his, and I clung tightly to mine. These rituals are a growing phenomenon in our churches, and as a result there is now a nice pile of stones outside my front door. ● Wesley's Chapel, 41 City Road, London EC1Y 1AU (0171-253 2262)

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Man at the helm of the new-look RAC

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CAR 97

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Page 5



Alan Copps meets the youthful British experts competing with Honda to beat the world fuel-economy record

Teenage tyros on 4,000mpg drive

As the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, announced that he was increasing the duty on petrol, I was driving along the motorway in a Jaguar. I glanced at the fuel gauge and stopped at the next service station to top up. It swallowed 40 litres (8.8 gallons) of unleaded at a cost of £26, a saving of £1.60 on the price a few hours later, and enough fuel to travel around 200 miles.

Then I thought of the car I had just been looking at. That amount of fuel would have been sufficient to carry it 20,257 miles, that's from London to Beijing and back. But next week it will be competing against another vehicle capable of circling the equator (24,902 miles) on just 2½ gallons of petrol.

The car I had been examining is the EB2, which last year won the junior section of the Shell Mileage Marathon, with an average of 2,302 miles per gallon. Its successor, with a home-made engine that ran for the first time this week, is expected to double that.

But when the young engineers behind this project go into this year's marathon at Silverstone on Friday week, the entries will include Team 1200, a group of Honda's engineers who are the new record-holders at 9,427mpg and who will be aiming to break the 10,000mpg barrier.

We are talking here about extremes, about vehicles free of any of the constraints of passenger carrying, comfort, safety, speed and all the other factors that make our road cars return figures that are tiny fractions of those above.

Paced with increasingly stringent European rules on emissions, Volkswagen is developing a car that will achieve 90mpg. But the most economical manufacturer's claim I could find from a current list of cars sold in Britain was of 76.4mpg, in out-of-town driving for a diesel engine Audi A4.

So how does a band of schoolchildren go about creating a car that does 4,000mpg? The EB stands for Equipe Bignon, a ten-strong team who work in farm buildings around the home of their chief designer, Oliver Way, 17, near Petworth in Sussex. EB2 has been modified since its victory last year and has already achieved more than 4,000mpg in testing at the Goodwood racing circuit near by, where the Earl of March, a motorsport fanatic, has encouraged his young neighbours. It is based on a spaceframe chassis, has filler steering, a carbon-fibre body

and uses a highly modified 50cc Honda moped engine, the favourite power unit of many amateur contestants.

But the team's latest development, EB3, is the most astonishing machine. It relies on a 30cc power unit they have built themselves, using machine tools that Oliver's father, Edward Way, bought to maintain his own vintage racing cars.

This twin-spark, double overhead camshaft unit was machined from two solid blocks of aluminium and fitted with a modified Suzuki piston. The biggest problem was fitting the cast-iron liner to the cylinder. "In the end we put the liner in the freezer and the block in the cooker. They fitted easily then," explains Oliver.

"I drew the original plans on paper, but to design the body we drew it out on the ground because it all depends on the size of the driver. We've extended EB3 and now call it EB3A to fit a larger driver."

Jeremy Cooper, 15, the chief engineer for this car, won the junior technical award last year. He eagerly explains that the three-wheel layout shared by all the cars not only reduces friction but also avoids the need for a weighty and complex differential. They are all chain-driven.

The efforts of this team, whose youngest member, brother Jeremy Way, is 12, have attracted generous sponsorship. The bodyshell is made from a carbon-fibre composite which costs £800 a sheet. Adrian Reynard, whose racing company builds Indy-car chassis, gave them two sheets. Michelin gave them the tyres, and the Environment Agency a £1,000 grant.

But does the technology of vehicles like this percolate down to the cars we drive? Dr Graham Paul, of King's College London, has entered a car that has achieved 8,000mpg in testing. He is intent on breaking the British record of 7,591mpg set by the French *Lydie La Joliverie* team in 1992. "It's a bit like Formula One. You can sometimes point to direct spin-offs like disc brakes or active suspension. But more often by going to extremes, by doing without all the compromises that road cars have to make, you can work backwards to achieve technology that can be applied."

He's been competing since 1979 and his latest car is based on carbon fibre and polystyrene construction and has a 28cc engine, developed through sponsorship with



The EB3's body shell, above, is moved into position. The EB2 last year won the junior section of the Shell Mileage Marathon, averaging 2,302mpg. Its successor, with a home-made engine, is expected to double that figure



Coworth Engineering. He thinks the engine is too big for the job, and has experimented with units as small as 4.3cc and once achieved 4,000mpg from a 7cc engine. But in tiny engines the friction caused by pistons and valves rapidly reduces efficiency.

Team 1200, who established their world record in a Finnish marathon last year, will also be using a carbon fibre car, which weighs just 35kg, much lighter than the driver. It will be powered by a 70cc water-cooled engine.

Like all the teams they will use a "coast and burn" strategy, accelerating to about 25mph and then shutting off power to cover the ten-mile course at the stipulated minimum average speed of 15mph.

The Shell Mileage Marathon takes place at Silverstone on July 18. There are 115 entries.



The team designed their spaceframe vehicle chassis on the floor, around the driver

Oddest drive under the sun

Forget the mileage marathon and that old-fashioned business of pouring fuel in a tank, writes Alan Copps. Once it has started, this car, rapidly becoming familiar from Honda's advertising, consumes nothing at all.

The Dream Solar car holds the record for the 2,000-mile challenge for sun-powered machines, travelling from Darwin to Adelaide in Australia in 33.32 hours. It arrived in Britain last month to give a demonstration run at the Goodwood Festival of Speed.

Powered by the silicon cells that cover its body, it is driven by a 1.5kw electric motor. Power is stored in a heavy-duty battery pack for starting off, but once the car is under way the electricity generated by the cells is enough to keep it moving.

So what is it like to drive this car of the future? A brief test run outside The Times office this week supplied the answer: weird. Trying to get in to the Dream is challenge enough since there is hardly any room for legs between the motorcycle-style con-

A quick spin in Honda's solar record-breaker

trols and the shaped seat. The driving position is lying down and rear visibility is nil.

Once settled, the driver is in for an eerie experience. Switch on and twist the throttle and a faint whistling sound precedes a surprisingly smooth take-off. But try to steer and all kinds of strange creaking and groaning emanates from the body shell and the long tail. The streamlining is so tight that the wheels touch the carbon-fibre reinforced plastic bodywork and parts of it turn with the wheels.

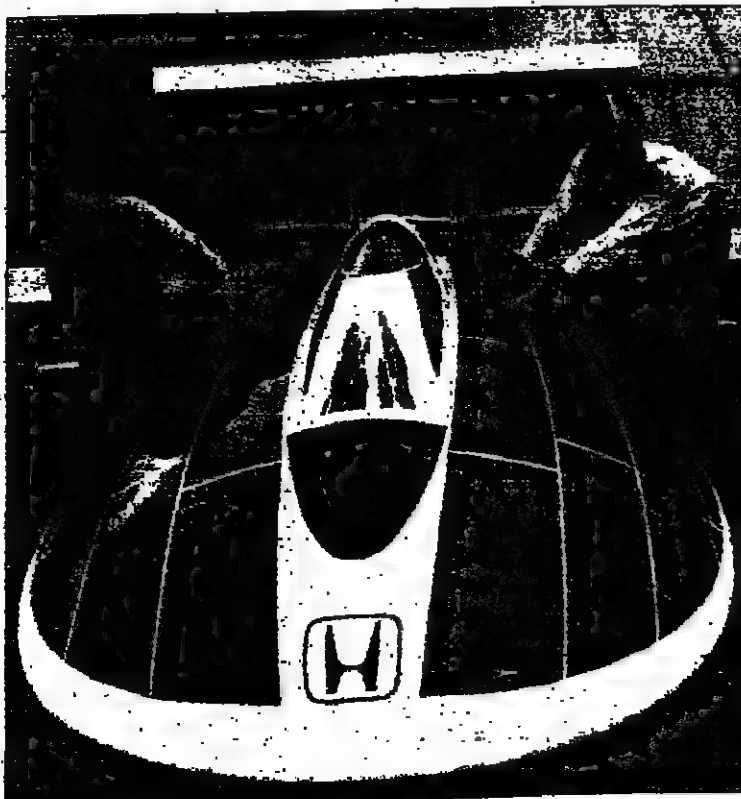
The turning circle seems huge and the noises are disconcerting, but it's light enough to be picked up and humped round a corner if stuck. The brake is a simple motorcycle lever and there is a digital speedometer on the handlebars.

That's it. There is no other equipment to speak of. Even on an overcast day in Wapping there was enough power to get round the car park. But it's a nerve-racking drive, constantly wondering what you might hit with that wonderful long tail. It must also have been stiflingly hot in the enclosed cockpit on the way across Australia.

Astonishingly, the car has a maximum speed of 87mph and will cruise at 56mph, but it is not road-legal in this country.

Constructed by a volunteer team of young engineers at its research and development centre in Tochigi, Japan, Honda says the technology of the Solar Dream will help in the production of future electric vehicles.

The company already markets an electric car in California, where strict environmental rules demand the sale of ultra-low-emission vehicles. But while the Dream will be used for demonstrations over the next few months, Honda has no plans at present to market an electric car in this country.



Silicon cells cover the car's body and drive a 1.5kw electric motor

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THISTLE HOTELS

The columnist who brought derision and contempt down upon cyclists is forced by fears over fading health and wealth to peddle a different line

Why I am taking to the saddle

Now that Gordon Brown has demonstrated that the difference between a Conservative Chancellor punishing the motorist and a Labour Chancellor punishing the motorist is the way that the sentence is pronounced with a different accent, we shall have to get on with finding our own ways to control the car without the car controlling us.

Therefore I shall now be purchasing a bicycle. Hang on a minute, you are thinking. Whoa there, just a second, hold your horses. Is this not the fellow who, a few months ago, was lashing out at all over the militant cycle tendency and calling them a bunch of fascists? Can this Barnard be related to the Barnard who called cyclists selfish for blocking the streets of various

DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION



Peter Barnard

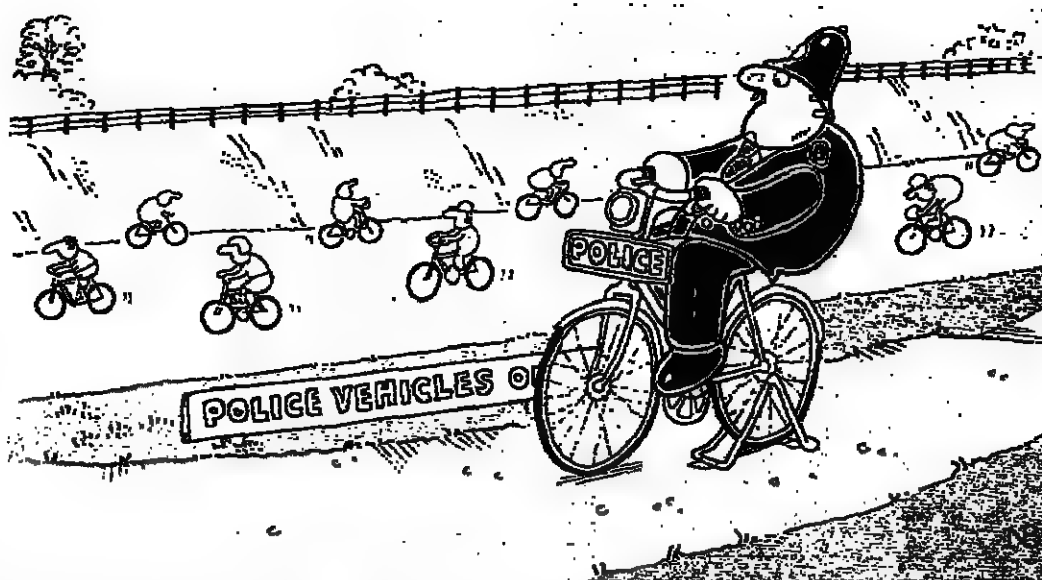
cities in order to protest against the motor car's habit of blocking the streets of various cities?

The very same: guilty as charged. In mitigation, however, I must point out that I have no objection to the bike in principle. Cycling is not like hanging, it is not

a matter of conscience. There is a lot to be said for cycling, at least, I hope there is, or I shall not be a cyclist for long. My objection to some cyclists, as opposed to cycling per se, can best be summarised by an experience I had recently on a narrow country road.

A cyclist was in front of me. I slowed down and kept my distance. There was a verge, which the cyclist could have used to let me pass, but he did not do so. So I stayed behind him, knowing that a junction was imminent. At the junction, the cyclist stopped on the crown of the road so that I could not overtake.

The cyclist looked over his shoulder, presumably to ascertain the level of my blood pressure. He then pedalled across the junction, still in the middle of the road, and it was only at the next junction,



nearly a mile further on, that I managed to pass him. As I did so, he honoured me with a V-sign. A Churchill biographer on a cycling tour of the Cotswolds? Very likely.

Of course idiots like that are no more typical of cyclists than an idiot who would have driven the cyclist off the road to get past him would be typical of car drivers. I

daresay there are plenty of good things to be said for cycles and cyclists and I intend to find out what they are.

I cannot claim that I am entirely motivated by a desire to see if the bicycle really can work as an alternative, or at least a supplement, to a car. Having given up smoking I need some way to fight

off the flab and an alternative use for my hands, so why not a bicycle, albeit one that will hopefully have enough gears to make pedalling easy on the hamstrings? Just as long as it does not have an ashtray.

So yes, the bike as a recreational vehicle clearly has merits, but whatever the anti-car lobby may say, the car remains the most

triumphant invention of the transport industry so far. Any government that thinks we are voluntarily going to give up the privacy, convenience, comfort and freedom offered by the car in exchange for pedalling a bike or hanging about waiting for buses must be mad.

Anti-car fascists want me to give up the car and use public transport, but round my way there is none. There are no buses. Well, there is a bus, but I am not prepared to get into short trousers and start carrying a satchel in order to be allowed on it. Therefore my choice is between a bicycle and a horse. I tried a horse, but had great difficulty tying it to the back of the car so that I could take it on holiday.

So a bike it is. When I last owned a bike, it had three gears. According to a brochure before me, bicycles can now be bought that have more than 20 (and I see no sign of one with automatic transmission). Some very posh bikes also have front and rear suspension and springs under the saddle. These cost, er, £1,800. Blimey, I could buy a halfway decent car for that, so I shall be looking at the lower end of the market. Something unfashionable will do nicely.

Hugh Hunston looks forward to a day when rescuers save you before trouble happens

High-tech revolution inspires RAC rally

He has guided vast cargo freighters across the world's oceans, commanded the 4th Battalion of Royal Green Jackets in Northern Ireland, and helped put Jaguar back on the road to international commercial and motor-racing success.

Not one to shirk challenges, Neil Johnson, the Royal Automobile Club's chief executive and general secretary, is in the advanced stages of rejuvenating a British motoring institution. With less emphasis on "Royal" and a tilt away from clubbiness, Johnson, a product of Sandhurst, is quick-marching the organisation towards a high-technology, 21st-century role as a "mobility provider".

Gleaming new purpose-built Transit and Mercedes Vito patrol units are to be introduced, crammed full of state-of-the-art gizmos that interrogate and diagnose, rather than prod and fettle under bonnets.

The move is accompanied by a dreamy, almost surreal, feel-good advertising wave, orchestrated by strategy director Jan Smith, with the soothing mantra: "We will not let our members go into the future empty-handed."

Smith's earlier, even more tangential, approach to selling Mazdas in Britain was not judged a roaring success within the industry, but Johnson insists this campaign is on target.

Cerebral, rather than mechanical in approach, it is central to the new philosophy of embracing a world where the client lives, works and plays in a world also containing buses, trains and bikes. Johnson reasons: "Our core is still a motoring organisation and we still represent 'the motorist'. But we have to recognise the they are general members of the community, involved and concerned about the transport debate."

Johnson argues that the private car must fit into the general picture, or risk accelerating into its own obsolescence.

"I have to be pretty robust

about who this man or woman the motorist is. There are a couple of hundred Mr and Ms Toads who think the freedom of the road is only theirs to enjoy. Our members are pedestrians, bike riders, bus passengers, and train users. Our responsibility to them is not just on motoring but the wider remit of mobility."

Receptive to a rash of green transport initiatives, Johnson is nonetheless pragmatic, and will fight the corner of car-borne transport, in this wider context. Not that he had an easy time trying to persuade the last Tory government that wholesale neglect of road repair programmes was a false economy. "Dealing with the last regime was like banging your head against a reinforced concrete wall. We kept telling them if you let your roof fall into disrepair you will ultimately need a new roof rather than forking out to replace a few slates. I trust the new team will see the benefits of the argument."

Adapting, or in Johnson's words, anticipating, is the key to the re-invented RAC. It is a policy based on two premises. The first is the long-term or even lifetime relationship, which he says is good business.

Retaining members pushes up renewal rates, and year-on-year loyalty in turn makes commercial sense. Recruiting, or re-recruiting is far more costly than keeping the customer satisfied.

Johnson also sees a parallel with the sales strategies of carmakers, both in Britain and Europe, where market saturation means the bulk of business involves replacement, rather than first-time buying.

Within that context, Johnson believes: "Three-year warranties have an inevitable ring about them. But I wonder if it overcomes, or influences the decision to buy someone else's car." So speaks the man, who in 1975 launched BL's pioneering Supercover warranty-recovery initiative. It was with the AA, because his present employer rejected the concept.

Johnson argues that the private car must fit into the general picture, or risk accelerating into its own obsolescence.

AUTOFAX by David Long and Les Evans

THE TROJAN BUBBLE CAR
COMPANY ALSO BUILT
MCLAREN RACING CARS

BUCKMINSTER FULLER IS THE ONLY CAR DESIGNER TO HAVE A CHEMICAL ELEMENT NAMED AFTER HIM: CARBON-60, OR BUCKMINSTER FULLERENE.



RAC won't represent the "Mr and Mrs Toads", but wants to put car use in context with transport users such as cyclists

The other plank in the RAC's platform involves technology, technology — and technology and an ever wider mobility remit.

Johnson sees the day dawning, arguably by the middle of the next decade, when the membership card, and related on-board electronic technology allow RAC members to "travel wherever and whenever they want to go".

The technology will be based on the increasingly commonplace in-car route-finding and congestion-avoidance systems. On top of this will be a

welter of resources, including constant technical monitoring of the car's vital functions, access to hotel bookings, rail timetables, car park locations, restaurant reservations, concert tickets and even emergency dental appointments.

Three elements — a mobile phone, a global-positioning satellite (GPS) system and intelligent navigation aids — have to be in place to turn the idea into reality.

RAC vehicles are currently evaluating a GPS system and Johnson reckons that fitting a Ford Mondeo with the re-

quired equipment would cost around £2,000. But as the manufacturers and linked providers of various services join in, and the volume of users rises, costs will tumble. The RAC predicts that it will all be affordable by the end of the decade.

Johnson emphasises: "There will not be one big bang where it all comes together. We are already moving very fast and are now deep in discussions with carmakers and service providers to start pulling together some of those elements."

Not only are the manufacturers competing to put smart technology on board, but the RAC plans to supply carmakers and members with systems to put into existing cars.

"There is no reason why we should not interrogate the car's technical diagnostic system from our control centre and diagnose a fault down the line," he says. "A driver could receive a call telling him or her: 'Your car is about to break down. Turn right in half a mile into the hotel car park and our patrol will sort it out while you have a cup of coffee.' This is probable. — not just

possible. If the car could not be repaired immediately then we would book them a room or make onward travel arrangements."

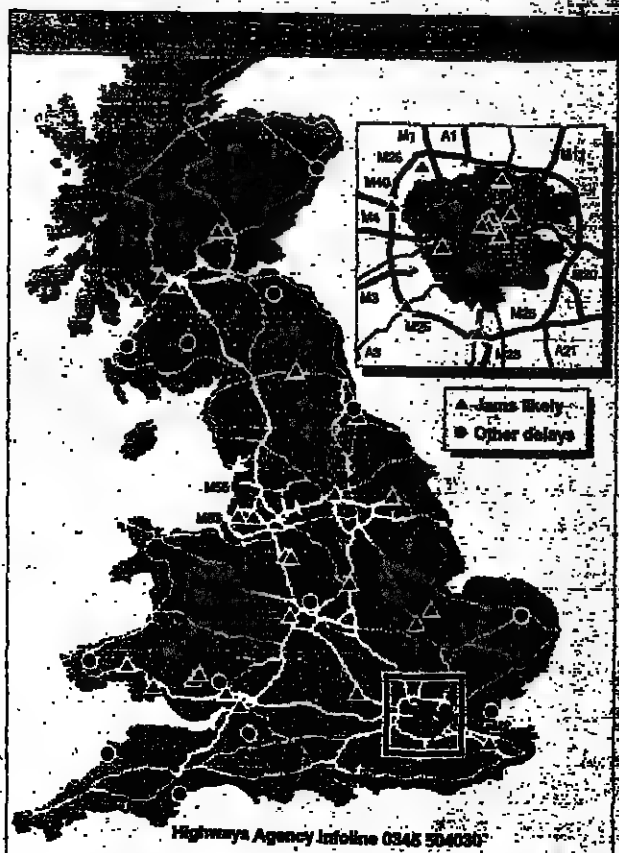
As Johnson and his staff stitch together technological and commercial alliances to put the system in place, he denies that removing the crown from the RAC livery means discarding royal connections.

"We remain uniquely proud of our royal association. The Queen is our patron and Prince Michael of Kent our president. We made the change because people are rightly uneasy about the crown's use for commercial purposes. The changes came after full consultation with the Palace. The crown is retained for the institution of the RAC and our motorsport division."

At least the chaps in blazers will get the chance to retain their crowning glory at the RAC-backed British Grand Prix at Silverstone this month. And in all probability the RAC's high-tech locate-and-rescue units will aid some of the 90,000 racers paying homage to the internal combustion engine that weekend.

● LONDON
A401 Shaftesbury Avenue. Down to one lane westbound at St Giles Street. Delays on High Holborn and Bloomsbury Street.
A11 Leytonstone. Major roadworks with lane closures at A12 roundabout.
A4 Pall Mall. Roadworks on westbound carriageway at King Street and Waterloo Place.
A4 Piccadilly. Eastbound roadworks on Old Bond Street and Westbound at Brick Street, affecting eastbound traffic on to Hyde Park Corner and northbound on St James's Street.
A306 Hammersmith Bridge. Closed both ways to general traffic for structural works.
A406 Upper Edmonton. Major roadworks on Angel Road (North Circular) over Lee Valley viaduct.
● SOUTH-EAST
M40 Buckinghamshire. Long-term roadworks with contraflow between junctions 1a (M25) and 3 (Wycombe East).
A127 Southampton. Roadworks on Victoria Avenue at junction with Caenmarvon Road.
A41 Watford. Lane closures eastbound on North Western Avenue from Hunton Bridge roundabout to Levensden Green Interchange.
M20 junction 4, West Malling, Kent. Long-term works for erection of traffic signals on the slip roads and roundabout. Various lane closures.
M40 Oxfordshire. Resurfacing work between Watlington and Oxford. Drivers heading to junction 8 of the M40 from Oxford are advised to use A40 and A418.
M25 junctions 6-10, Surrey. Restrictions and lane closures both ways between Reigate and A3.
● SOUTH-WEST
M5 junctions 18-19, Bristol. Contraflow across Avonmouth Bridge with 50mph limit.
A39 near Bude, north of Bude. Resurfacing with temporary lights.
A379 Teignmouth. One lane closed both ways for roadworks.
A37 Shepton Mallet. Roadworks as junction with A361. Delays on all approaches.
MIDLANDS AND EAST ANGLIA
A1 Alconbury. Cambridgeshire. Construction work with contraflow and lane closures.
A1 Peterborough. Works at Haddon interchange with repairs to the A1M.
A1076 Norwich. Narrow lanes eastbound on Dereham Road.
A52 Beeston. Major roadworks on Derby Road.

Delays between Sherwin Arms and Priory roundabouts, A38 near Westford.
Roadworks northbound between Cuswell and Moneysmore. Contraflow in operation.
A50 Kidsgrove. Liverpool road closed due to roadworks between The Avenue and Gloucester Road.
A60 Stokes on Trent. Major construction work at Mair.
A41 Northampton. Temporary lights on Blifton Road, near Cooper Street.
● NORTH
A689 between A18 and A1185, north of Middlesbrough at Wolviston, Durham. Reduced to one lane.
M62 East Filling. Reduced to one lane between Howden and North Clee with 50mph limit.
A580 Heywood. One lane closed eastbound on East Lancs Road near Haydock Industrial Estate.
A567 Boodle. Stanley Road closed northbound between Merton Road and The Strand.
A69 Northumberland. Major roadworks with contraflow between Acornb. Turning and Hexham West.
A19 North Yorkshire. Major roadworks with two lanes each way between Thoby-on-Tees and Billingham. Only one lane on some slip roads. 50mph limit.
M1 West Yorkshire. Major roadworks continue around Leeds junction with lane closures and speed restrictions. Delays on M1, M621 and Dewsbury Road.
A1058 Tyne and Wear. Cradwell bypass down to one lane each way. Diversions in operation.
● SCOTLAND
Aberdeen. Anderson Drive reduced to one lane between Seaford Road roundabout and Queens Road.
A78 North Ayrshire. Roadworks mean restrictions both ways on Eglinton Road in Ardrossan.
M8 Glasgow. Down to three narrow lanes both ways at junction 25, the Clyde Tunnel.
A726 South Lanarkshire. Temporary lights on East Kilbride to Strathaven Road.
● WALES
A484 Francis Well, Tonerdy, Carmarthenshire. Major roadworks.
A4069 Aberdare closed due to roadworks between Town Bridge and Cwmnach Road.
A49 Monmouthshire. Roadworks between Usk Junction and M4 junction 24 Newport. Expect long delays at times.
A483 Swansea. Contraflow and roadworks at the Fabian Way docks between the Vale of Neath Road and Ebbw Crecant.



Morag Preston joins the lucky *Times* competitors on a tough advanced course to improve their road skills



The cage, a tight cone box, proved a hard test of our drivers' manoeuvring skills...

Women winners drive — and finally survive

Sexist jokes went out of the window as readers impressed instructors with their motoring skills

Faced with a fleet of female drivers, instructors on the Drive & Survive course were forced to abandon their women-driver jokes.

As the winners of a competition run by *The Times*, and sponsored by Privilege Insurance, showed off their motoring skills, the instructors on the advanced driving course were forced to admit, "Yes, women are better drivers."

Fired up by some sobering statistics (ten people are killed daily on roads in the UK), we set out to improve our driving skills and minimise risk at the same time.

Split into groups to spice up

the competition, I set off with the Black Team for a spot of emergency-reaction training.

Our instructor, Rick Shortle, advised: "Look where you want to go and your arms will follow — look for your option out."

"It takes two and a half times as long to think about stopping the car than it takes to do it. If you have ABS, you can brake extremely hard and still steer." Encouraged to drive as fast as they could, then stop or swerve according

to instructions, there were a few dead cones at the end of the session.

"That was a real adrenalin rush," exclaimed Lisa Goodfellow, a contracts administrator from Birmingham, whose heart-rate had been given a kick-start after she realised that the car following her into the complex belonged to a Drive & Survive instructor.

Next up was the off-road driving. Eking our way between the maze of trees, we

were warned about the pine cones or "rollers" as they are affectionately known.

Teetering on the edge of a vast waterbath, instructor Tony Shefford hollered: "Give that water some respect. You don't know what's under there. The vehicle will rock and roll you, but the rule is that if we get stuck, you get out and push while the driver moves over."

Halfway up a hill, we were instructed to stall the Daihatsu. Then we were told: "Get into reverse, take your feet off the brake and the clutch, straighten the wheel, fire the engine and then roll backwards."

It all went horribly wrong for Goodfellow — in spite of her T-shirt emblazoned with the message, "It's all muscle" — as the 4x4 made an ungainly backwards lunge.

As Shefford instructed her on how to rectify the situation, she snapped back: "You sounded just like my driving instructor then, but your reactions were much better."

After a fortifying lunch and a chance to share experiences so far, the Black Team was sent out on the road for driver-awareness training. Concentration, observation, and anticipation were the buzzwords on this section.

First in the driving seat was Nicola Banks, a secretary from Burton on Trent, who had been up until the early hours of that morning, celebrating her 29th birthday. Having failed her driving test at the age of 17, she succeeded three years later.

Now she is hooked. Driving out of the Crowthorne com-

plex, instructor John Venning hardly stopped to draw breath: "Look more threatening. Drive towards the middle of the road. Cross the line if you want — that way they'll see you coming. As you're going round a corner, wait until the kerbs in front of you don't look as if they don't touch anymore, then go for it. Yes, I felt it that time."

Venning was clearly following his own advice: "If you're finding it hard to concentrate after a bad day, then give a running commentary. That way you'll see and hear the signs... keep two hands on the wheel while braking — feel the road."

Reverse parking came next, then the cage — a tight box marked out by cones. The object was simple — drive the car in, turn it around, then drive it out again in the shortest time.

"That was impossible — my arms are aching," sighed Charlotte Sibley, who claimed to have better luck in her Mercedes automatic. Goodfellow, however, turned out to be a whizz at this, putting the instructors to shame.

The fun-looking Fiesta decorated with colourful question marks was another test of concentration and logic — turn the steering wheel to the left and the car moved right.

The skid car won the seal of approval for the most fun to be had on four wheels, as the competition winners spun round fast enough to put Torvill and Dean to shame. Some of the drivers had to be forcibly removed.

Exhausted at the end of the day Banks hailed her father to take her home. "There's no way I'm driving 140 miles home after that," she scoffed.



a task made tougher for Nicola Banks by her birthday party the previous night

Class toppers: Jaci and Ophelia

JACI GILROY, 31, a lecturer in holistic therapy from Bristol, won the reverse-steering section of the course, and shone both in the cage and on the off-road parts.

She cut her own path in the 4x4 rather than follow the well-worn tracks. "I love driving, and am devoted to my Fiat Panda 4x4. The course made me appreciate how impressive ABS is. It was good to test how quickly you can stop."

Ophelia Weir, 33, a financial adviser from London, was the winner of the driver awareness training section, and says that her experiences

behind the wheel of her Audi estate with two youngsters in the back must have paid off. "You have to concentrate more when you have kids in the back, which is harder when they're yelling. But I have always loved driving. The course was an incredible experience — seemingly driving like a lunatic, while learning to be safer. It should be compulsory for all drivers once they've got experience."



Winners: Ophelia Weir, left, and Jaci Gilroy



Immaculate MGB engine bay holds 1800cc motor — powerful in its day, but not now

Spotless: the time-warp sportsters

Vaughan Freeman on a collector's dream: the last two unused 1970s MGBs

Two of the very last MGB sportsters to be built at British Leyland's Abingdon plant have come to light in as-new condition, with each car having done only 50 miles.

The time-warp find is the stuff collectors drool over, especially when the cars concerned are MGBs, the last of which rolled off the production lines the best part of two decades ago.

The cars were bought as production of the MGB ended, and were whisked straight to a heated storage garage where they have lain ever since, pampered, polished, and serviced, their engines started and regularly turned over.

The red MGB GT and its white time-warp partner, a Roadster convertible, have been put up for sale by the Leicester Brooklands Classic Car firm.

The two cars were not even registered when they were bought, but instead transported to the garage where their anonymous owner would co-



Red MGB GT is the better car, though the white Roadster will fetch a higher price

set them for the best part of two decades by way of making an automotive investment.

The cars each cost just under £4,000 to buy brand new, and now they are up for sale, with prices in the £10,000 to £18,000 range. Mark Geary, a partner in Brooklands, says:

"These two cars were among the 25 of the very last standard MGBs off the production line."

"They were bought in 1961, and the gentleman who bought them stored them away in a heated garage, where they were put up on blocks and looked after for the following 17 years, although they have never been used."

The cars are completely standard with 1800cc engines

with overdrive. The Roadster is a far more desirable car than the GT even though the GT is clearly a better car for everyday use. The fact is people want Roadsters."

"We have had a lot of interest even from as far afield as Japan. We are not in a rush however to sell them really."

The cars were purposely put by as an investment which hasn't quite come off. I expect had the money been invested elsewhere it might have brought a better return."

"If you had walked into a BL showroom in 1961 and found yourself looking at two MGBs, then that is what these cars look like now. They are perfect, absolutely spotless. Look-

ing at them is like going back in time."

The MGB might have been the rakish performance car of its day, but with a top speed of around 100mph, and a 0-60mph time of 12 or so seconds, it would be hard pushed to keep up with a modern Fiesta.

Even so, the MGB's popularity is enduring and likely to stay that way says, Geary. "The MGB stays popular because a lot of them were built, which kept the price down initially, compared to say an Austin Healey or a TR6. Even today it means they are an affordable classic."

Its affordability and the numbers in which it was

produced made the MGB Britain's most successful ever sportscar, and more than half a million were built. The four-cylinder engine put out 95bhp, giving performance which, when the car was first launched in the early 1960s, was impressive. It had the added touch of wind-up windows, the first MG to have such a luxury.

After the MGB's demise the MG badge was stuck, to purists' dismay, on Montegos and Maestros, though a genuine new MG, the MGF is now sold by Rover.

History disputes whether one of the tuned Morris cars sold by Morris Garages manager Cecil Kimber in the early 1920s was the first MG, or whether that honour rests with the Morris Cowley-based "Old Number One" of 1925.


There is no dispute though that Mr Kimber of Morris Garages (hence the initials) founded one of the most prolific of sports car companies, whose little machines inspired public loyalty and set numerous motorsport records.

As to the anonymous keeper of the two cars, Geary says only: "Part of the agreement we undertook when we bought the cars was not to tell anybody who originally bought them and has been storing them for all this time. I can say he is a mega-millionaire who employs around 7,000 people worldwide, and is in the process of disposing of his collection of 30 or 40 cars."

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People-mover that's a real car



FORECOURT

Ferodo's

■ THE COMPANY that claims "world's first brake manufacturing its century this year by attempt on the British land-speed motorcycle."

Ferodo, which made the first early cars and was producing London Underground trains by 1907, is backing an attempt on the record by pupils of Beauchamps School in Essex which will take place at Elvington airfield in Yorkshire on the July 19. The record

The Cosworth is the car loved by thieves, and investing £30 or so in a computer history check on a Cosworth is money well spent.

bike-reco



Family Estate enjoys good

The great virtue of the 406 Family Estate is the way that it squares that circle; not only is it a car renowned for its performance, handling and level of comfort, but if you want it to be, it becomes with a minimum of effort a seven-seater with at least as much luggage space remaining as you can find in most MPVs. The 406 Family Estate, therefore, is a generous load bearer, there is a generous load space. If you want seven seats, all you have to do is pull up two cleverly constructed rear-facing seats, complete with seat belts, which fold out of the load-area floor. Although at first sight the extra seats with their tubular construction look a little spartan, for children

But it's far from being the only asset. In what is arguably the most competitive section of the car market, the Peugeot 406 has established an enviable reputation as "a driver's car". Allied to the striking good looks of the 406 range, a wide choice of engines and excellent economy, the Family Estate adds up to a very appealing package.



Engines: 1.8, 2.0, 2-litre turbo or 3-litre V6 petrol, 1.9 and 2.1-litre turbo-diesel.
Performance: (1.8-litre petrol) max speed 115mph, 0-62mph in 11.4 seconds.
Economy: (1.8-litre petrol) Urban cycle 22.7mpg, extra-urban 40.3mpg, combined cycle 31.4mpg.
Equipment: (1.8L) Driver and passenger airbags, keypad immobiliser, remote locking, four-speaker RDS radio cassette.
Price: from £15,440 on the road.

Ferodo, which made the first brake blocks for early cars and was producing brakes for London Underground trains by 1907, is backing an attempt on the record by pupils of Beauchamps School in Essex which will take place at Elvington airfield in Yorkshire on the July 19. The record

The Ferodo trophy presented annually for outstanding achievement in motorport is one of the most sought-after prizes. First won by Jaguar in 1953, last year it was awarded to Damon Hill.



SPARE PARTS

Buyers of used models may need to take action to benefit from security measures that are already installed, says Retainagroup, which runs the National Vehicle Security Register backed by ten leading makers and more than 1,000 motor dealers. The NVSR system means

This acts as a deterrent for thieves and as a means of verifying ownership, but anyone buying such a car needs to inform Retainagroup to maintain this protection. Owners can register their vehicles for a one-off fee of £11 by calling the company on 0181-871 1333. "More than half a million vehicles are stolen in the UK every year and 60 per cent of these are never recovered," says Wendy Rowe, managing director of Retainagroup.

هكذا من الأهل

Motoring careers into the millennium

Vaughan Freeman starts our look at future car designs by asking why the thriving British industry is having so much trouble recruiting young blood

Doctors, police officers, lawyers, even journalists, all regularly feature in sexy television roles, cashing in on the popular image of their glamorous careers and lifestyles.

Nobody, though, has yet made a six-part drama about a high-powered car company executive from Birmingham, or a mini-series about a pony-tailed designer or shop-floor car plant worker in Swindon.

The problem for a car industry desperate to recruit fresh blood, is that it is not seen as "sexy". While wannabes queue to become barristers, doctors and City brokers, the eyes of school-leavers and university graduates glaze over when the chance of a career in the automotive industry is offered.

That lack of small-screen interest reflects a wider disenchantment with the world of carmaking that is sending worrying signals to industry chiefs.

This is despite Britain's car industry being worth billions of pounds, with design studios that put their Milan, Turin and Detroit counterparts to shame. Those working in Britain to create the cars of tomorrow use high-tech computer back-up matched only by the aerospace and defence industries.

For those who choose a career in the car world, Walter Hasselkus, put in charge of Rover by parent BMW, has only praise: "From our British workforce we expect commitment, hard work, and enthusiasm, all of which are there."

The problem, he says, is finding enough right-calibre people in the first place: "When it comes to manufacturing engineering, the British are not convinced, or as dedicated as young people are in Germany, especially in the universities."

"In Britain we need the training and the competitiveness. Unfortunately the old habits still seem in place. In

the old days aspiring people would travel to administer far-off parts of the Empire rather than go to the North East to work in engineering.

"That way of thinking is still here. In Britain, parents thinking of a career for their children think first of the professions, of them becoming a lawyer or a doctor or whatever. Becoming an engineer is an option that is way, way down."

"In Germany it would be inconceivable for a lawyer, and I have nothing against lawyers, to be considered above a member of the BMW board."

Apart from receiving Government aid grants, one of the main reasons that car companies like Nissan, Toyota and Honda have set up shop in Britain is the reserve of engineering skills available.

It seems though, that that reservoir of skills, especially since they must now be matched to computer literacy, could be drying up. Korean manufacturer Daewoo's Worthing Technical Centre in West Sussex — the firm's biggest outside Korea — is recruiting around 250 new staff to take the total up to 1,100. But finding the right people is a headache for Daewoo's Engineering Managing Director Jim Mason.

"The zero industry is seen as 'sexy', but the motor industry

just is not," he says. "We have got to change that but it is not something that we can do by next Tuesday."

"Engineers themselves have to earn the kind of respect that doctors have in our society, and we have to encourage engineers to become far more interested in their continuous professional development."

He adds: "The impression that people have of the automotive industry is largely governed by an idea of production plants, and they tend to think of automotive engineering as producing thousands of vehicles in a car plant."

"On top of which the car has become a throw-away product, even though an enormous amount of work, thousands of hours of effort, goes into every aspect of a car. Yet the customer thinks no more of it often than they do of a fridge."

The car is extremely complex to build and is a very clever machine, yet all too often it is seen as a throw-away item. When you are talking to kids at school, they do not see it as a high-tech business.

"When you bring people here to our Worthing Technical Centre they are amazed at the diversity of work that we do. They have no idea what goes into designing, building and creating a car."

To help bridge the gap, Daewoo is working on plans to sponsor college students as well as whole university departments in an effort to extend its research and development capabilities.

Mason says: "We want to do projects for example, on how people bend their bodies, their knees and elbows, getting in and out of cars, as well as into the properties of different construction materials, and how they can be manufactured for volume car production."

At least Mr Mason is doing his bit. Both his sons now work as engineers.



Selvaag with his bizarre vehicle, designed to carry older people in 40 years' time, when resources are scarce, but grey power is at its peak

While it might look like a crash helmet for a house-fly — in fact it is Per Ivar Selvaag's vision of the car of the future, writes Eve-Anne Prentice.

The award-winning student, now in his final year at the Royal College of Art, has been recruited as a designer for Rover after producing a new look for Ferrari, and dreaming up this futuristic vehicle.

The bizarre-looking design, with its space-age body mounted on what looks like a veteran car chassis, is aimed at being a transport of delight for elderly people. Selvaag was inspired by the thought that huge numbers of older people are likely to make up a large proportion of the population by the time he is a pensioner.

The extraordinary car is seen as half-taxi, half-private vehicle, catering for 40 years' time, when fossil

Design prodigy creates retirement runabout

fuels are scarce and people are more likely to share modes of transport.

"The concept is for a car 40 years from now, when I am 65," says the 25-year-old, a Korean-born Norwegian citizen. "I foresee that my age group will be much more influential than people of 65 are today. We will have more money and influence the clothes people wear and we will command greater respect from the young. I don't want to be seen as someone less able than others."

His car of the future would be able to carry four people, including one in a wheelchair, and there would be (almost) standing room only.

"You will stand up more than you will sit down in it," says Selvaag. "You will sort of perch in it and take more weight on your feet than on your bum." The car, with side-opening doors, would probably be powered by recycled engines and be able to use several forms of fuel.

Selvaag, who gained a BA in transport design at Coventry before moving to the Royal College of Art, last month won the £1,000 Triplex Prize for the best final-year vehicle design project. Last year, he won the Citroën Car for the Next Millennium award.

Mike Fallon, of Pilkington glass,

which sponsors the Triplex Prize, says: "Cars are looking even sexier these days and a prerequisite is vehicle designers with energy, vision and originality."

However, Selvaag knows his design is unlikely to become reality in this form. "This is not something feasible for today," he says. "When I am 65 this design will just be a memory, but it shows the manufacturers what you think about car design."

As a graduate of the RCA's transportation design course, Selvaag joins a network of British-trained staff who feature in the studios of almost every major car-maker worldwide. Ken Greenley, professor of vehicle design, has credits which include the Bentley Azure, the Aston Martin V8 and more recently, the Korean-made Ssangyong Musso off-roader.



Rover's Walter Hasselkus

Amazing glazing: screen history

Early cars had no windcreens, but as speeds increased, flat screens came into use. These were of plate glass and could cause shocking injuries in crashes.

■ BEFORE the development of wipers (hand-operated ones first seen in France in 1907, electric in 1923 in England), screens were rubbed over with freshly cut potatoes or apples to repel water.

■ LAMINATED safety glass was invented by accident when French chemist Edouard Benedictus dropped a glass flask containing a celluloid mix. Instead of shattering, it bounced. Recognising the significance of the discovery, Benedictus patented a safety glass/celluloid laminate in June 1910.

■ GLASS first appeared as factory equipment on Stutz and Rickenbacker cars in 1926. The next year it was standard on the Model A Ford.

■ ROYAL cars were not fitted with safety glass until 1931 because King George V was concerned that the discolouration from which early laminates suffered would prevent people from seeing the royals inside.

■ THE FIRST car to feature a built-in demister was the 1931 Horch, a German make later subsumed into Audi.

■ THE ORIGINAL curved all-across windscreen was fitted to the Chrysler Imperial Custom models of 1934.

■ A SCREEN-washing device first appeared on English-built Standard and Triumph models in 1935.

■ GLASS became compulsory on British-registered cars in 1937.

New glasses make cars far cleverer

Ian Morton sees head-up displays, infra-red vision and theft-proofing

Brilliant sun has been beating down on your parked car. You open the door. Time was when you were met by a furnace blast. Not now. Sweet air welcomes you into the cool interior.

You drive off. Essential information gleams in the screen in your line of sight. No longer do you read instruments on the fascia. You are held up at traffic lights and a jolt with an eye on your briefcase and a half-brick in his hand batters at your side window. The brick bounces off.

Rainwater from a summer downpour pours off the screen without distorting your view, and any excess is scooped off by automatic wipers. Your screen is heated, so no misting occurs.

You drive into fog, but infrared images of what lies ahead appear mirrored in the screen. You are experiencing automotive glass in the first decade of the new millennium.

None of this is fanciful. Car glass is poised to do far more for the motorist than just provide vision and protection against the elements. Glass is becoming intelligent.

Keeping cool has presented European carmakers with a special problem. Other parts of the world with high heat and humidity characteristics appear prepared to continue with conventional air conditioning, but air conditioning

drinks fuel and boosts exhaust emissions, and EU fuel-efficiency objectives have been set at over 90mpg. Glass will play a major role in the solution.

Ideal car glass would allow no ultraviolet or infra-red radiation to reach the interior while meeting the legal requirement for light transmission — 75 per cent for European windscreens. The laws of physics preclude this

combination, so the glazing designer must work towards the best compromise. His tools are tinting and coating.

About ten years ago Libbey-Owens-Ford, the US subsidiary of UK-based Pilkington Group, launched a green-tinted glass which reduced ultraviolet and allowed through only 44 per cent of infra-red radiation.

This technology is widely used in today's MPVs and

sports utilities, and is preferred to more expensive coatings. In its darkest form it has been most spectacularly adopted for the huge wrap-around rear screen of the Vauxhall Tigra.

Inside the car, coatings can cut reflections by up to 50 per cent. For outside surfaces, glass that hates rainwater — hydrophobic or slick glass — is likely to become a familiar feature within the next five years, according to Pilkington. The exterior surface is coated

with a chemically bonded silicon-based compound that repels water, so rain droplets are blown away in the air stream, carrying dissolved dirt with them.

Daimler-Benz is testing such glass, and Toyota has some models on sale in Japan with slick side glass.

The possibility of projecting information on to the windscreen in the driver's sightline, as used in military aircraft, is now close to reality for drivers. At the NEC in November, Jaguar will show a head-up display system developed in collaboration with Pilkington.

There is also a strong safety potential — versions under investigation include the use of infra-red cameras to enhance

the driver's vision at night and in fog. Head-up glazing is expected to make its first production appearance on an American truck in about two years.

Improved security is high on the glass-supplier's agenda. No matter how sophisticated the locking or alarm system on a car, there is little the owner can do to combat side-window break-ins.

Car-makers are looking to laminated glass, which takes far longer to penetrate and would add only about £100 to the total cost of the car. Within ten years it will be virtually standard, says Pilkington.

Car designer and glass expert must now work together virtually from the first graphic design terminal. Glass is getting cleverer and shapelier, and the glass supplier has become a key member of the creative team from the very beginning of the design process.

Carmakers may now translate motor-show concept cars with dramatic glass styling into volume manufacture. And it can be done swiftly — the Vauxhall Tigra is a case in point: since it was exhibited, show visitors were asked if they liked it, and their favourable response was swiftly into production. Without recent glazing advances this would not have been possible.

Audi out for new talents

Pay £90 for a ticket to this month's Audi Foundation ball in Bath and you could be doing your bit to further home-grown design talent, writes Russell Hayes.

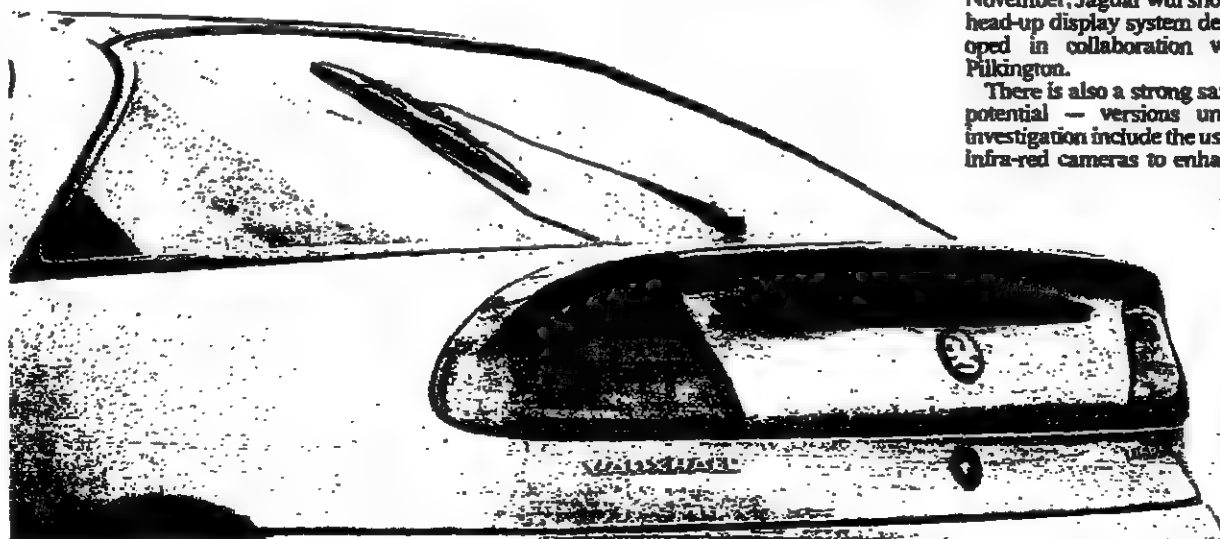
The English importer of the prestige brand is launching a non-profit organisation to support budding designers between the ages of 18 and 25. Anyone can apply, not just students. The call has already gone out for a fund manager.

"The aims of the Foundation reflect the Audi culture, where ideas are a precious commodity," the importer says.

The number of awards available has yet to be announced, but in the first year, students will receive financial support as long as their ideas can demonstrate something of commercial value or benefit wherever they study or work.

And it isn't just about cars. Last year Audi was a sponsor of the BBC Design Award, which was won by a wind-up radio for the Third World.

"It's really to encourage youth," said a spokeswoman. "We are known for our design and, though this may sound corny, we want to give something back." A job with Audi is not, however, necessarily on the cards.



Darkly tinted glass has been spectacularly adopted for the huge wrap-around rear screen of the Vauxhall Tigra



Pilkington's Italian subsidiary produced samples for the Fiat Bravo in record time

Going like the glazers

The design of the tailgate of the three-door Fiat Bravo posed a typical set of problems for the glass industry. There was a 30-month schedule for Pilkington's Italian subsidiary, SIV, to cooperate with Fiat to produce the design and then to install deep-bend equipment developed in Britain. Then robots had to be made to handle and fix the glass on the production lines at Cassino and Rivalta.

During the development stages, prototypes and samples were turned round more rapidly than ever before and important modifications were accomplished in as little as eight weeks, says SIV's top Fiat link, Michele Lizzi.

Thus, he says, the company was able to prove it could act fast — essential in an industry that may soon be taking only two years to get cars from the drawing board to the showroom.

"A powerful combination of highly

The latest technology brings quicker fixes, reports Ian Morton

advanced technologies enabled us to create the result, in which the glass almost appears to be suspended above the Bravo's body, and where the sophisticated flush-glazing system perfectly matches current styling requirements.

"Press-bending at the frontiers of technology allowed us to achieve the very complex shapes and curvatures with total control of precision while maintaining the highest optical quality," says Lizzi.

Another challenge in glass was set by the design of the current Range Rover. It became necessary to find a way to engineer a windscreen which went beyond the existing capabilities of the glass-

manufacturing process. Range Rover wanted curves that were twice as tight as conventional screens.

"The winged screen, with its increased outer edge curvature, was the only way to solve the complex style problem and achieve the required smooth blending of front screen and side glazing," says Land Rover design manager George Thomson.

Conventional laminated screens are shaped by the sag-bending technique in which a pair of flat glass sheets are supported around their periphery and heated to the point where gravity forms them into the required shape — good for optical quality but limited for complexity of shape.

So Pilkington laboratories developed a new forming technique in which gravity was assisted by a die to push the glass to its final shape, allowing precise control of edge shape, cross curvature and the tighter radius demanded by the stylist.

BRIEFS

Classics are covered

INDEPENDENT Insurance is offering unlimited free European cover on all its classic car policies and confirmation in the main European languages. *Morag Preston* writes. Unlimited audio cover and free cover for up to £250 of spare parts kept in the car or garage will also be included. Should your car be written off, you will be able to buy the remaining salvage.

MARKETED as "the on-road car with an off-road look", the new Volvo V70 Cross Country is powered by the same 2.5-litre, five-cylinder, 180-hp turbo engine as the V70 AWD model. At a cost of around £30,000, it will be available in the UK from September in free-spec manual or four-speed electronic automatic models.

PEUGEOT has realigned its UK prices on key models within its 406 saloon and estate car ranges, dropping the 2-litre LX petrol price to that of the 1.8-litre and reducing the premium for air conditioning on the LX, GLX, and SRI models.

HONDA is marketing the Civic 1.5i and 1.5i LS models as among the most fuel-efficient cars in their class, up to 30 per cent more economical than the Ford Escort 1.4 or the Vauxhall Astra 1.4i 16v. The Civics are also being promoted as having one of the most powerful engines in their class: the variable valve timing and lift by electronic control (VTEC) system allows a lean petrol/air mixture to be burnt during steady-speed driving conditions.

WORK has begun on the largest solar power installation at any manufacturing site in Europe and the first of its kind in any automotive plant in the world, at Ford's Bridgend Engine Plant in South Wales.

Helen Mound on how a schools' theatre group is trying to get crucial road-safety messages across to a new generation

The title might sound like the oldest joke in the playground, but when children are invited to see *Why Did the Chicken Cross the Road?* what they get is a play with a deadly serious message.

Presented by the StopWatch Theatre Company, the longest running production in a series aimed at getting the road-safety message across, especially to children who may spend so much of their lives travelling by car they are uncertain of the basic rules of the road for pedestrians.

A lot of education is campaign-led with the emphasis on "don't do this" or "you mustn't do that," says Adrian New of StopWatch.

"Our plays aim to look at why children want to take risks in the first place. We address the reasons why stealing a car or playing chicken on the road is considered a boost to their image. It's like concentrating on the causes rather than the symptoms."

StopWatch was launched seven years ago by New and his partner Steven Pearce. "We concentrate on issues that are important to youngsters like road, safety, and bullying, and more recently, problems such as joy riding and drugs."

While writing the play, Wheeler's attention was drawn to the trend of playing "chicken", a dangerous game in which children dare each other to run across roads in front of speeding cars. The play was changed to look at the peer pressure children are under, both to play chicken and to ride cycles without wearing helmets. It aims to encourage children to stand up for themselves and make their own decisions about their safety.

Despite expensive advertising by the Department of Transport such as the latest £7 million "Kill your Speed" campaign, encouraging drivers to slow down, local authorities say it's youngsters who need more education about the dangers on roads and have introduced Theatre in Education as a way of teaching children road safety.

StopWatch, based in Southampton, is one of a handful of Theatre in Education companies around the country that county councils are booking as part of the national curriculum's Personal and Social Education section.

Road safety officers believe the main problem is that children are no longer learning good road safety habits from a young age because they aren't brought up to walk to and from places - most of them travel by car instead. As a result, many are reaching their teens with little or no road sense.

Adrian New agrees: "Young children these days are genuinely not good at stopping at the kerb and looking. Because they rarely walk anywhere, they haven't developed instinctive road safety habits and they don't seem to understand why they should."



StopWatch Theatre actors are all professionals, but also are interested in working with children - they follow the plays with workshops

'We look at why children think stealing a car will boost their image'

Plays such as *Too Much Punch and Judy*, tackling the effects of drink driving, and *DriveTime*, about joy riding and car theft, are aimed at encouraging 14 to 16-year-olds to be more responsible motorists.

There are normally four actors in the cast, performing two 40-minute shows a day. Each show is followed by a workshop. "Although we use professional actors and actresses, most are experienced in Theatre in Education and working with children," explains New. "They like to work directly with the audience and see the benefits from their work."

Why Did the Chicken Cross the Road? is the story of two mothers and two lively 13-year-old boys, one afraid he'll be laughed at for wearing a cycle helmet, the other suffering peer pressure to play chicken: the latter is eventually hit and killed by a car. The workshop then discusses the reasons and the effects of the two boys' actions.

The children at Coleridge Community College in Cambridge were keen to show they'd got the message, acting out the heartache the boys had caused their loved ones.

Charlie Farrier, actor and tour manager, admits keeping the young audiences' attention is hard work. "But we try to talk and think like them when we act to be accepted, and it works." It works so well that some children ask the actors what school they attend.

PORSCHE

911 Carrera (1997) 2.8, 4-door, 170hp, 170000 miles, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 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Mowers have their work cut out

Readers' letters this month touch on scythes, log cabins and spotting rural folk in town.

Never let it be said that this column is not at the cutting edge. At my recent hint that the art of scything might be a thing of the past you were quick to cut the first from under me. Floods of people demanded to take part in my scything competition. We have enough willing scythiers to cause concern to the motorised grass-cutting industry.

One word of apology, Ted Ham of Chelmsford, Essex, writes:

"Scything, really? The tool is a scythe, but it is used to mow, and the user is a mower. Have you not heard of pubs called the Barley Mow or songs like Ten Men Went to Mow?"

Ted is right, but if we were to alter the title of our challenge to the Grand Mowing Match, I fear some younger entrants might turn up with a Qualcast, which is not the idea. Instead, we are trying to preserve a skill which I thought was on the decline.

Far from it. David Cooper of Birchington, Kent, a nature reserve manager, rebukes me for not being aware of the practices of conservation organisations. He tells me scythes are in wide use on his reserve because:

1. Health and safety demands that heavy-duty power tools are not used when one is working alone.
2. The safety gear one has to wear when using this machinery is unbearably hot on even a mild day.
3. I prefer to avoid, wherever possible, polluting the countryside with fumes and noise.

All good points. And on the last one, I bet Brian Rensson of Piddletrenthide, Dorset, wishes he had Mr Cooper for a neighbour. He writes:

"Petrol-driven strimmers have been the bane of my retirement to a supposedly quiet cottage in the heart of rural Dorset. Every year we hear the first stridulations around March 17 and they continue until late September. Somewhere within that almost every hour of every fine day, someone strains. As far as engine noise goes, we are far worse off than we had been in car-polluted Surrey because the snarl of the strimmer's engine is more intrusive than traffic noise."



Crofters harvesting cereal crops by hand in the Hebrides during the Fifties. Far from being a thing of the past, scythes are still used and have many supporters

Finally on this subject, a letter from a coming canon, Peter Woodhead, of St Peter's Church, Brackley, writes:

"If anyone wants an area in which to practise, there is a large churchyard here, a part of it without gravestones, and he or she is very welcome to have a go."

Those who have offered themselves as contestants can expect to hear from me within a few weeks. Having brought the scythe to the nation's attention and revealed that our underlying love for it is still alive, I must report that so far I have failed to do the same for the log cabin which I suggested, not entirely seriously, might form an ecologically and visually acceptable solution to the ever-urgent problem of rural housing.

We have just spent 2½ years living in a log house on the Isle of Mull, so I certainly write from experience. It was not well insulated so heating was not cheap. During heavy rain and wind it leaked so that water dripped down interior walls. It was not maintenance-free as the exterior needed regular treatment with Rotokil. Are these the three good reasons you need?

Possibly, although you may have been unlucky. I cannot believe all those Scandinavian log-house dwellers live with dribbles all winter. Mr C.S. Wall, of Alvaston, Derbyshire, writes:

"What is needed is a complete reversal of the method whereby high-rise blocks have been built in urban areas, and sprawling individual units have been built in rural areas. If houses (instead of high-rises) were built in towns, this would do away with the concrete

DOWN TO EARTH



PAUL HEINEY

jungles and the problems associated with them.

If one-off, high-rise buildings were built in the countryside, this would give people cheaper, more affordable housing without taking up vast areas of land. It shouldn't be beyond the capability of some enterprising architect to design an environmentally acceptable tall

building. After all, large sprawling buildings, such as Chatsworth House, are a perfectly acceptable sight — why not a single, properly designed, high-rise building?

I offer you Mr Wall's thoughts out of a desire to see the look on the faces of conservationists when they read it, and to invite any architect to redraw Chatsworth in the same proportions as Canary Wharf.

Last month, in your letters, we were offered ways in which town-folk could be recognised in the country. One positive clue was that they climb over the wrong end of a gate. A perplexed Miss Dex of Cambridge, writes:

Which is the right end of the gate to climb over, and why not climb over the middle?

Shall you tell her, or shall I? Mr G.P. Boleau, of Dunstable, Bedfordshire, writes with the defini-

itive guide to spotting country folk in an urban setting:

They wear badly fitting clothing, and generally look a mess. They carry the truly rural about their person, such that it smells awful. They like to prop up the bar and shout at one another even when they stand next to each other. They bring their animals — dogs, pigs, sheep, goats — into the tavern where they feed them the same food and ale that they consume.

They constantly talk about the unfair treatment they get from the government, the public, the weather, their wives, and nature; and claim that we, the public, don't understand them. In other words, they are a collection of ordinary, miserable sods, but we love them.

Country dwellers might consider that as the first round in the contest. I look forward to more letters.

The court of king crimson

FEATHER REPORT

I WAS IN a lane in Cambridgeshire when a linnet flew over my head and landed on the tip of a dead branch at the top of an ash tree. The sun fell directly on it, and its crimson breast-patches and forehead glowed vividly. The bird was the same thickness as the branch and looked just like a fiery tip to it. Then it started singing loudly — that tinkling, whispering, formless song that might be a music made by the wind.

Another linnet flew up to the tree and the first bird chased it briefly, then returned to its perch. The other bird settled lower down on the other side of the tree and I could see it was also a male, with crimson on the head and breast, but with the colour much duller, and a much more worn look.

Then four more linnets flew in, and arranged themselves on twigs under the second male. They were all young birds, without the red and with more streaky plumage. They were fairly obviously the family of the second male, who had probably lost his shine bringing them up.

They sat there very contentedly, while the colourful male went on singing. He may have been an unmated bird, while the mother of the family was probably sitting on the eggs of a second brood in a hedge nearby. Linnets are sociable birds — and this little group reminded me of a quiet family relaxing in the garden, with a noisy, easygoing neighbour.

DERWENT MAY

● What's about Birds? — Watch for male ducks molting into their dull 'eclipse' plumage. Twickers — male black-headed buntings. Capel Fleet, Kent; sea's petrel, Norfolk; red-footed falcon, Merion, Gwynedd. Birdline 0891 72123; 40p a min cheap rate, 80p at other times.



Linnets are sociable birds

At peace with a green burial

Carl Evans on a popular alternative to cemeteries and crematoriums

Jill Tattersall buried her mother in a meadow on a farm while sheep and cattle grazed in adjoining fields. A hawthorn tree marks the spot, but there is no headstone.

That was two years ago and many more graves have since been dug, trees planted and bird boxes erected. A pond is planned, and one day the meadow will become not only a woodland nature reserve, but also a "green burial site", an alternative to cemeteries and churchyards.

The days of marble tombs, concrete crosses and headstones may be numbered. Green burials are "the fastest growing environmental movement in the UK", says Nicholas Albery, a founder of the Natural Death Centre, a

London-based charity. "In 1993 there was one site, now there are 38 and they are more than doubling each year."

With 650,000 deaths in Britain each year there is a never-ending need for land in which to bury the deceased. Cemeteries are filling fast, taking space which could be used for recreational purposes and offering little cover for wildlife, say green burial supporters. More than 400,000 people are cremated, causing air pollution, while wooden coffins are made at cost to the trees. Crumbling headstones, some centuries old, lie neglected, often serving little purpose other than for local historians.

Now proponents of green burial sites are extolling the message that the land should be for the living, and that



Arthur and Jill Tattersall planted a tree at Gisela's burial

woodland "cemeteries" free of gravestones, but offering wildlife and plant habitats, are the future. They also claim such woodland burial sites, places in which to wander and enjoy the annual nature cycle, offer therapeutic healing for the bereaved.

The Natural Death Centre, which formed the Association of Nature-Reserve Burial Grounds, was set up in 1991 by Mr Albery and two other psychotherapists. Research had shown that nine out of ten people preferred to die at home and the charity's initial aim was to help families

looking after a terminally ill or elderly person.

It was then found that some bereaved families gained comfort from helping with funeral arrangements. While the majority assume professional undertakers are needed to tie up the loose ends when someone dies, the NDC and other organisations discovered it was far simpler. A death certificate, issued by a doctor or hospital, is taken by the bereaved to the registrar and the body can be buried almost anywhere.

Woodland burials just seemed to solve so many



The grand woodland burial of Gervase Jackson-Stops

problems at once — the overcrowding of cemeteries, the need for diversification of farmers' incomes, an ageing population, and the need to encourage wildlife habitats on farms," Mr Albery says.

The green burial movement claims it is not trying to remove people's religious beliefs, and church services are quite normal before burial.

Christine Atkin, who runs Greenhaven Woodland Burial Ground in Warwickshire with her son, Nick Hargreaves, says: "The whole business can

be as simple or elaborate as you like. The misconception that funerals are expensive, have to involve black hearses and undertakers, is wrong."

Greenhaven uses an estate car to collect the deceased, charging 70p a mile, but says Mrs Atkin: "You can turn up with the body in your car, dig the grave yourself and plant your own tree. But one customer wanted a very grand affair and his burial involved a team of black horses pulling the coffin across the fields and a service carried out by the Bishop of Peterborough and the vicar of Northampton."

This customer was Gervase Jackson-Stops, once architectural adviser to the National Trust.

About 65 people have been buried at Greenhaven, in Yorkshire, the Harrogate-based AB Wildlife Trust has acquired Kate's Fell, an area of woodland and pasture within Brimham Rocks. Because it is a site of special scientific interest, planning permission has been granted for only 25 graves. John Bradfield, the site organiser and a social worker, wants to sell the plots to buy more land for green burials.

Farmers, wildlife trusts and landowners are establishing sites. The East Devon District Council offers panoramic views over the sea at its Seaton green burial site. Graves, which in London can cost more than £1,000 because of land prices, are just £57, plus digging. In Christchurch, Dorset, a site run by Mike Hedger has been used for 100 burials and 100 more have been pre-booked.

"Being brave lets no one off the grave," wrote Philip Larkin in his poem *Anabasis*, and while most people prefer not to think about such matters, pre-bookings a burial plot guarantees a rural location.

Arthur Tattersall has paid for a plot at Greenhaven next to his wife Gisela, who died two years ago, aged 82. His daughter Jill, from Newark, Nottinghamshire, says: "My mother was green-minded, loved gardening, nature and walking in the countryside and hated the vulgarity of a conventional funeral. As she got older she said she didn't want any fuss and wanted to be buried in a cardboard box."

Having spoken to Greenhaven, the Tattersalls decided on a simple funeral, with no religious service, but the opportunity to bury Gisela themselves and say their own thoughts by the grave. A cardboard coffin was used and they planted wild flowers as well as the hawthorn tree.

"Planting the tree was an enormous comfort to us," Ms Tattersall says. "We're not grave-visiting people and I would have felt very uncomfortable with a conventional grave and headstone. The tree represents something that goes on living."

● The New Natural Death Handbook, £11.95 inc p&pp, from the Natural Death Centre, 30 Heber Road, London NW2 6AA. ● AB Wildlife Trust, 7 Knot Road, Harrogate HG1 3EF.



ON THE SPOT: EBORSTON, NORTH YORKSHIRE

Rural recommendations

The place: St Mary's churchyard, Eborston. The view: A sweeping panorama of the Vale of Pickering, bounded by the Yorkshire Wolds on the southern horizon.

Appeal: The immensely restful atmosphere of this green, fertile landscape, laced with willow-girt streams and seemingly always basking in sunshine and shadow.

Historic interest: Eborston Hall, designed and built in 1718 as a mini-stately home for William Thompson, then MP for Scarborough, by the great master of the English Palladian style, Colen Campbell. Now the home of Johnny and Jane de Wend Fenton, this refined and elegant building, with its large welcoming doorway flanked by Tuscan columns, actually presents us with Campbell in his least Palladian mood. Though it has many Italianate features, it is replete with the ambience of a northern European civilisation. Close by, enveloped in the grounds of the hall,

stands the gem of St Mary's Church with its Norman nave and chancel besides many other interesting features dating from the later Middle Ages. Best time to visit: An early summer's day, alive with the song of larks and caressed by southerly breezes off the Wolds — though being snowed in at the Hall as a guest in wintertime has undeniable charms.

OS reference: 992833 (Landranger 101). Nearby: The Grapes inn, a hostelry renowned throughout the locality, not only for its magnificent ales and mouth-watering pub food, but for the atmosphere of conviviality which reigns within its portals at almost any time of the day or evening. Further off, there is Scarborough, for my money the most handsome watering place on the North Sea coast of England, with its splendid Victorian architecture, its wonderful beach and its quintessentially "seaside" atmosphere.

PETER DAVIES

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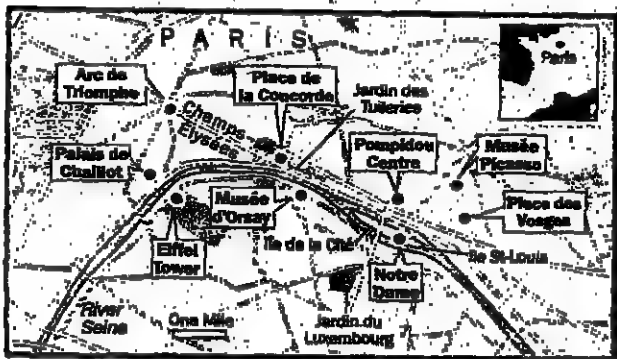
THE TIMES travel

Libby Purves has Beduin and breakfast
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City break: Would three days be enough for Rita Golden to give her children an appreciation of the French capital?

All for the love of Paris



"Excusez-moi, S'il vous plaît. Move your butt Get out my way."

The refrain, following me up the Champs Elysees, was not encouraging. Anglo-French relations. But it had a certain tempo to it and was keeping us going. The Champs Elysees was hot, crowded and long. I had just lost one child into the Virgin Megastore, and my arm was being wrenched out of its socket by a little person delirious to disappear into the Disney shop. Was this the Paris I had planned?

My aim had been simple: not just to visit every Parisian landmark but to make them fall in love with Paris. The children had never really been to Paris before (the oldest had spent one day there three years ago with the school but only seemed to remember laughing at the French people), but now they were seven, 11 and 15. I deemed their legs long enough and their mother strong enough to explore what has to be the loveliest capital in Europe. We would go for three nights, after which I hoped they would know their Left Bank from their Right and their Montmartre from their Montparnasse.

Straightaway, there were problems. One was the age range: what delights a seven-year-old rarely rates as cool to a teenager. Plus, the 11-year-old was such a dreamer. I was going to have to be vigilant not to lose him under the first Citroën whizzing past Gare du Nord. To add to my problems, their father was verging. Anything tall had to be conquered before he joined us.

Food was another headache. The oldest and his father could spend hours devouring *fruits de mer*, *escargots* or *cuisse de grenouille*; the two little ones' eyes only really lit up when illuminated by the golden neon arches of McDonald's.

Then, how much could we cram into three days? I stirred up memories of half a dozen trips to Paris and then spent a long bonding session with a map of the city. The way seemed clear: we would explore the city in bursts of energy, hit only one art museum a day, stop at every merry-go-round we passed, and flop

often at pavement cafés where they could practise their French by ordering their own cake and crepes.

We went on Eurostar. They were mad-keen to go on Eurostar. The thrill of plunging under the English Channel and coming up in France is still such a novelty, there's a definite pioneering spirit aboard Eurostar. Five languages buzzed around our heads, and we particularly liked the French lady behind us who spent the entire trip reprimanding her two little girls; each time they argued back in perfect English.

Three hours on a train, however, is a long time for children: cards, crayons, Walkmans and books are essential fodder. As is food. We packed a French picnic of baguettes, pepperoni, cheese, olives, apples and crisps. It got everyone in the right spirit and it was cheap.

At last: Gare du Nord. A taxi hurtled us across the city, over the Seine and lurched to a stop on the cobblestones outside our hotel.

The Hôtel du Jeu de Paume is a Parisian poem of a hotel, slap-bang in the middle of the Ile St-Louis, slap-bang in the middle of the Seine, slap-bang in the middle of Paris. Built on the site of the 17th-century royal tennis court for the game of Paume, it is a miracle mish-mash of ancient beams, scrubbed stone walls, hidden courtyards, modern art, glass balconies, a rickety glass lift, and a border collie called Enzo who spends his time pretending he's a doorman.

Within half-an-hour, we set off to pack in premier Paris essentials: the Eiffel Tower and the Arc de Triomphe, the two landmarks that even the youngest had requested.

Immediately we got side-tracked. The Ile St-Louis is enchanting. Straying down the Rue St-Louis en l'Île, the narrow cobbled street outside our hotel, you could believe you were in Provence. Disney couldn't have done it better. Fish stalls, flower shops, patisseries, and crenelated buildings hundreds of chimneys (rooves were held), are wedged between art galleries, toy shops, and cafés. At the end of the street, the sunshine beckoned,



"When the children's legs threatened to give way after conquering the Louvre, we requisitioned one of the toy sailboats at the pond in the nearby Jardin des Tuileries"

and round tables and wicker chairs spilled out onto the pavements from the brasseries on either side. A clarinetist was playing jazz from the Pont St-Louis, a post-post-Impressionist was dabbling away at his easel, several couples were ardently kissing, and the Seine winked at us. The children joined the rest of the world there and just stared.

They would have stared all day. I prized them away and marched them north over Pont Marie where we tried our first faltering French sentences on the Métro clerk.

The pilgrimage to the Arc de Triomphe should proceed up the Champs Elysees, so we got off at Tuileries. The Tuileries Gardens are not so much garden as garden path. The white gravel dazzles your eyes and ruins your shoes. But here was space to run and let off steam, which went down well.

We crossed the Place de la Concorde to squeals of delight from our littlest. She had spied Carrousel Galopant, a musical carousel of Belle Epoque artists. On she got.

We marched purposefully up the Champs Elysees. It is a beautiful avenue but goes on forever and the distractions are many — Hugo Boss, the Virgin Megastore, the Disney shop — and knees were buckling. We collapsed along

side the Paris chic at Le Fouquet's, and watched the cars and roller-bladers roar up and down instead.

Recharged, if impoverished by £4.50 cokes, we finally stood under the Arc de Triomphe. The children gazed solemnly at the flame of remembrance and then raised up the stone steps to the top. The view was spectacular and the 11-year-old had fun walking round and round the perimeter counting the roads radiating from under his feet.

Beyond l'Etoile, the Eiffel Tower ... well, towered. We had to go.

We took the Métro to Trocadero. Here the sight of the Eiffel Tower as you swing round the Palais de Chaillot is awesome, and the question, "Do we go right to the top, Mummy?", was one more of concern than exasperation. But a merry-go-round restored spirits, and the wonderfully named Barbe à Papa (candy floss) restored sugar levels.

As feet were getting sore, we took the lifts. The view was spell-binding and the children felt the need to commemorate the event by buying tiny tacky replicas of Monsieur Eiffel's masterpiece.

Coming back to earth, it was early evening and exhaustion was taking over, but we hadn't eaten. Madame Frache from the hotel came to our rescue and recommended le Flore en l'Île at the end of our street, a brasserie from where you can gaze on Notre Dame.

And it was in that small café on this certain day that my 11-year-old son ate snails. I repeat, snails. The waiter seemed oblivious of the cataclysmic event he was witnessing. Was this the child who once would only eat chicken nuggets if they were the right shape? Perhaps it was the gadgetry that inspired him: hold the shell tight with this contraption, then take this spindly fork and push and pull and twist and hey presto, one black gooey curly snail oozing with butter, parsley and garlic. Does this mean that he'll now eat mash potato?

Day Two: for starters, Parisian Routes to Heaven and Hell. We swung over the Pont St-Louis, the pedestrian bridge that connects the Ile St-Louis to the Ile de la Cité, and marvelled at

the solemnity of Notre Dame. A choir was practising for a TV recording that night: Notre Dame must have some of the best acoustics in the world. The crowds, however, were fearsome. I clung onto the children.

Rather usefully my daughter needed the lavatory. We can now recommend the lavatories under Notre Dame. For 30p you get a spotless cabinet, your own washbasin and a mirror. Impressive.

Round the corner from Notre Dame is Sainte-Chapelle, the private chapel of Louis IX that is now worshipped for its glorious stained-glass windows. This was far less crowded. As we walked into the main nave, the sun streamed in, making even the agnostic gulp. The children were quite transfixed.

Around the next corner is the Conciergerie, that vast

14th-century fortress that looms over the Seine and looks like something out of central casting when lit up at night. Inside it's gloomy, cavernous and echoey. A video with English subtitles gives a raw history of how in this prison 2,700 poor, rich wretches from the French Revolution, including Marie-Antoinette, waited to hear their fate, before being trundled through the streets to the guillotine. It was scary stuff. My little girl left holding her neck.

Stomachs were being held too. We crossed Pont Neuf to La Samaritaine, the department store, and took the lift to the ninth floor and then climbed to the Terrasse. From here is one of the greatest views of Paris — and it's free.

If you grab a table on the west side you can see Sacre-Coeur, the Eiffel Tower, the gold dome of Invalides, the

Seine curving through the city, straight up the Champs Elysees to Etoile, plus washing strung between chimneys.

Back on ground level, we stood awhile on the wooden footbridge, Pont des Arts, arguably the bridge over the Seine with the best views. Unbothered by traffic, here you can stand and dream. It even has benches if you have time to sit. We didn't.

Culture called. It was time to go to the Louvre. Pel's monstrous glass pyramid looks like the aliens landed right in the middle of the courtyard of the beautiful 16th-century facade of the Louvre. It fascinated them. The Louvre is seriously splendid — and huge. You have to decide which bit to do. Being the crass tourists they were, the children voted for the Mona

Lisa. After walking past the gigantic canvasses of biblical scenes, the Mona Lisa seemed rather small and lost. The excitement around the picture, however, was palpable with students running towards it squealing. The kids went from side to side to see the enigmatic smile follow them and then unfortunately asked me why it is so famous.

Our art appreciation afternoon continued with the statues in the Jardin des Tuileries. "Why don't they have any clothes on?" asked my small daughter. "Don't stare," hissed her brother. She looked a bit chagrined, and then whispered to me, "They're all different." Quite so. Between the statues and the clinging couples, she was getting a good biology lesson.

It was late afternoon and

Continued on page 18

PARIS WITH CHILDREN FACT FILE

■ The author was assisted by her children: Max, 15, Gus, 11, and Morrow, seven.

■ Eurostar (0345 303030) has adult fares from £89 to include a Saturday night stay. Children aged 4-11: £54. Youth fare 12-25: £79. Under threes: free but no seat. Request table seats if available.

■ Accommodation: Hôtel du Jeu de Paume, 54 Rue St-Louis-en-l'Île, 75004 Paris (00 331 4326 1418). Rates per night for double room with bath start at £95. Breakfast £8 per person. In August, breakfast is included.

■ A museum card, Carte Musées et Monuments, is available at museums and



Shock, horror: Gus tucks into a plate of snails

major Métro stations, at £7.50 for a day; £15 for three days.

■ Métro: a carnet of ten tickets for £5. All journeys cost the same.

■ We also played Monopoly with a board of Paris which not only increased their French vocabulary but also familiarised them with many street names and everyone got used to francs.

■ Reading: The Travel Bookshop (0171-229 5260) recommends: *Toto in Paris*, by Biddy Stevens (Little Brown, £3.50); *Time Out Paris* (Penguin, £9.99); *Degas and the Little Dancer*, by Laurence Anholt (Frances Lincoln, £8.99); *Paris Quest*, by Judy Allen (Red Fox, £2.99); *Where's Maman?/Où est Maman?*, by Diane Goode (Red Fox, £3.99); *Madeline*, by Ludwig Bemelmans (Scholastic Children's Books, £5.99).

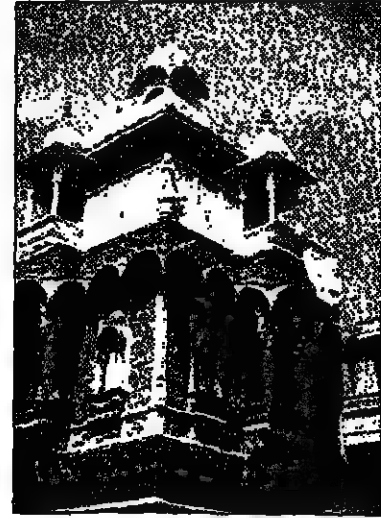
Many of our passengers are exceptionally well travelled and are constantly looking to us to conjure up some magical new destination or unique means of getting there. This coming Winter we have such a trip which will suit those travellers who appreciate the opportunity to get closer to a country, its people and culture. It is not a trip which offers endless visits to temples and museums, but rather a slow-paced journey through rural Rajasthan, allowing time to absorb the colourful lifestyles and stark beauty of the countryside.

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Each fort or palace will usually

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and walk in the nearby villages, many bustling with life and craftsman. Obviously, such a trip is not for those who prefer to be cosseted and pampered in ultra-deluxe hotels, require 24 hour room service and all the refinements that a 5 star hotel can offer. Travellers undertaking this tour should appreciate that the accommodation will, in some properties, be simple in style and there may only be a limited choice of cuisine. However, the rewards will be immense; the opportunity to stay in a totally unspoilt environment amongst gentle people, a million miles away from the usual 'tourist India' of today.

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South Africa: Eye to eye with an angry lion, Sandy Gall completely forgets what he is meant to do . . .

Eaten up with terror

I was just a walk through the South African bush one sunny morning. Before we started, Marius, the big young Afrikaans ranger who carried his heavy-calibre hunting rifle as if it was a peashooter, called us for a talk. "It's highly unlikely on our walk this morning that we will come face to face with any large animal," he began. No one looked desperately disappointed. "Virtually all animals, including elephant and lion, fear humans and will avoid them whenever possible." His baby blue eyes were reassuringly calm. "So we're unlikely to run into any trouble. But if we do, don't panic, above all don't run. Just stand still and do what I tell you, OK?"

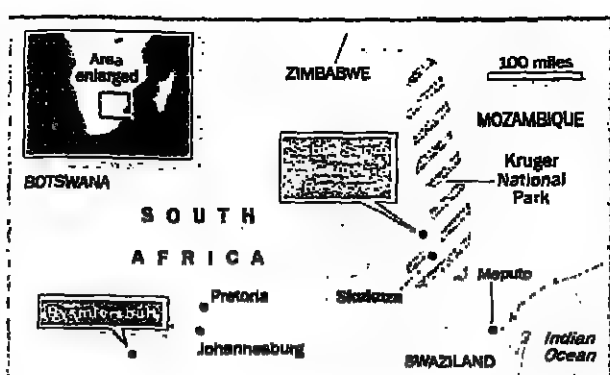
Marius shouldered his rifle and set out along a sandy track with ten of us, men and women, mostly British, trooping along behind him. It was a beautiful late summer day in northern Transvaal, with fleecy white clouds sailing across the blue sky. We were in Inyati, part of the Sabie Sand Game Reserve, on the edge of the Kruger National Park; and for most of the party it was their first walking safari.

The grass was high — the rains had been exceptionally heavy — and as we came to a wet patch on the track, hundreds of tiny butterflies rose in a yellow cloud in front of us, dancing and twinkling in the sunlight. We stopped to admire them and Marius explained some intriguing facts about a particular type of grass.

Birdsong bubbled among the acacias, their delicate green foliage hiding vicious thorns. A hornbill, nicknamed a "flying banana" by George, another ranger, swooped across the bush in front of us, its huge beak making it look front-heavy.

We knew we were in a rich game area. The Kruger Park covers nearly 8,000 square miles — the size of Wales — and there is no fence between it and the adjoining private game reserves. Two nights earlier, we had watched a pride of lion, consisting of two lionesses and nine big cubs, setting off at dusk on a hunting expedition.

We followed them in safari vehicles for half an hour until we lost them in the bush. A pride of that size takes a lot of feeding. Luckily, there were hundreds of impala grazing almost everywhere you looked. The day before we had come across a family of cheetah, a mother and three full-



SOUTH AFRICA FACT FILE

■ British Airways, Virgin Atlantic and South African Airways have scheduled flights to South Africa. SAA (0171-312 5000) has promotional fares of £412, including taxes, to Johannesburg; £452 to Cape Town. Tickets must be purchased before July 11 for travel by September 30. Otherwise, fares start at £829 return.

■ Bluebird Holidays (0990 320000) has charter flights and holiday packages to Johannesburg and Cape Town from November 19-April 30, 1998. Flight prices start at £399 return.

■ Car rental: Budget (0800 181181) has a week's inclusive hire from £163.02 from Cape Town. Hertz (0990 906090) quotes £169 for one week, £338 for a fortnight.

■ The author stayed at Inyati Game Lodge (00 27 1149 30753) in the Sabie Sand Game Reserve, a private game reserve. SAA quotes £128 return from Johannesburg to Skukuza, then courtesy bus to Inyati.

■ For further information: South African Tourism Board (0181-944 8080).

■ Reading: *The Travel Bookshop* (0171-229 5260) recommends: *The Kruger National Park*, by Jane Carruthers (University of Natal Press, £11.95). *In the Heart of the Country*, by J. M. Coetzee (Penguin, £5.99). *South African Eden: The Kruger National Park 1902-1946*, by James Stevenson-Hamilton (Struik, £14.99). *Cadogan Guide, South Africa, Swaziland and Lesotho* (£14.99).



"I found myself looking straight at a large male lion"

grown cubs sunning themselves on a rock at the top of a small valley, their mask-like faces regally impassive. To me, they are the most beautiful of the predators.

"You notice how they all have their backs to us," George said after switching off the engine. "They know they're safe with us here, but cheetah are always on the lookout for lion or hyena. They

chase them off their kills — very often the cheetah have hardly had time to start feeding when the lion and hyenas arrive. They'll kill them, too, if they get half a chance."

"You see the pattern of stripes on their faces? That means they're diurnal, not nocturnal like the cats." Splendidly immobile, the four cheetah turned their large golden eyes away from us, searching the landscape for prey, or a predator. I wondered aloud where the male was.

"Oh, once they've mated, they lose interest. They keep to themselves mostly."

Then, in the evening, we had been lucky enough to see a young leopard lying indolently on a patch of grass, oblivious to our presence.

All this went through my mind as we walked behind Marius for half an hour in a big circle, and I was just thinking how tame this was by comparison when he stopped and held up his hand. Then he pointed at the ground and all eyes followed his finger. In the middle of the track lay a forked twig.

"That means the pride is somewhere close," Marius said, keeping his voice down. "Wait here, while I have a look." He moved off the track into the bush remarkably quietly for such a big man. After he had gone about 30 yards he stopped, looked, and then



"Two nights earlier, we had watched a pride of lion, consisting of two lionesses and nine cubs, setting off at dusk on a hunting expedition"

slowly waved us forward, putting a finger to his lips. I was in the middle of the line and had dipped almost to where Marius was standing when I heard a very distinct growl. Perhaps two growls together. Marius raised his hand but we had all stopped in our tracks. The growl was unmistakably a lion's.

"The pride's just ahead of us, through the trees," Marius whispered. We were all tense now, breathing shallowly. I peered through the bush, and after five seconds could just make out the shape of possibly two or three lions lying in a clearing — but whether I was

looking at the lionesses or the cubs, it was impossible to tell. "Just start moving back, very slowly," Marius breathed. As I inched backwards, my gaze swung a few yards to the right. What I saw made me stand absolutely still. I found myself looking straight at a large male lion and he — head up, ears pricked, and perhaps only 50 yards away — was looking straight at me: eyeball to eyeball. I could not remember if I was supposed to make, or avoid eye contact, so I began to back away again until he was no longer visible, and I was no longer under his intense scrutiny.

It was a relief to reach the road. When we had all reassembled, Marius said: "You did exactly the right thing. That first growl was a warning. If we hadn't stopped the lionesses would have charged — because of the cubs — and Jonathan, the male lion, would almost certainly have joined in."

That's when I wondered what I would have done if he had charged. Stood rooted to the spot like a gibbering idiot? Closed my eyes? Or stared him down? I finished the walk in a kind of happy

daze. There is nothing like danger overcome to elate the soul.

When we were back in camp I asked Marius what he would have done if one of the lions had charged.

"Well, I wouldn't have shot until the last moment. You probably only have time for one shot, anyway, and there's always a chance that the lion will abort the charge. But you never know with a lion as aggressive as Jonathan. He used to be young and aggressive. Now he's just aggressive." I asked why he was called Jonathan.

"After a researcher we have

here called Jonathan Swart. He's doing a PhD on pangolins (scaly anteaters), which are nocturnal. One night he bumped into the pride. The male was so aggressive that Mr Swart had to climb an acacia, which is very prickly, in a hurry, leaving all his papers on the ground. He was up there all night. The lions wouldn't let him down. Next morning, when they had gone, he came down the tree to find his papers all chewed up. Ever since, the lion's been called Jonathan."

As I walked to my room I decided I didn't want to be a pangolin researcher after all.

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WORD WATCHING

Answers from page 23

SOXHLET

(b) Apparatus and method devised by F. S. Soxhlet (1848-1926) for continuous solvent extraction of a solid. *The Journal of Physiology*, 1899: "I used case in which had been extracted for a week in Soxhlet's apparatus." 1968, *Organic Synthesis*: "Barium Hydroxide is placed in the thimble of a Soxhlet extractor over a flask of boiling Acetone."

CALABOOSE

(c) The name in New Orleans and adjacent parts of the Southern States for a common prison. Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 1850: "Send them to the calaboose or some of the other places to be flogged."

CARACAL

(a) A feline animal found in northern Africa and south-western Asia. It belongs to the sub-genus of lynxes. Jardine, *Felines*, 1834: "The caracal has always been considered to be the lynx mentioned by the ancients as possessing such wonderful power of sight."

CUNETTE

(a) A trench sunk along the dry ditch or moat, serving as a drain and as an obstacle to the passage of the enemy or to persistent mining. 1763, *Chronicles Annual Register*: "The cunette of Dunkirk is entirely filled up excepting a trifling part for which there was no earth." Napier, *The Peninsular War*, 1828-40: "A cunette or second ditch had been dug at the bottom of the great ditch."

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... while Dennis Rink prospects for diamonds, and Hilary Rubinstein visits a heaven-scent hotel

Mine host who puts a sparkle in your eye

It was a scene that the young Cecil John Rhodes would have recognised. The barren veld is pockmarked by huge man-made gorges, leaving red scars across the landscape. Ricketty, rusty machinery scrapes away layer after layer of gravel.

More cranking machinery washes the gravel, shakes and spins it, finally spitting it onto rough sorting tables, where hopeful hands carefully comb through the debris, searching eagerly for the glint of a rough diamond.

The Digger's Tour is not your regular visit to a mine, especially for visitors to Johannesburg, where everything is gold. This is diamond country, a place where you can expect to get your hands dirty, your shoes muddy.

Here, among machinery that dates back to the discovery of diamonds in the area, you have a chance to see and feel mining just as it was in the prospecting days of a century ago.

Visitors are allowed, in fact encouraged, to lend a hand in the sorting process.

Should you find that gleaming prize, the operators promise that they will replace it with a cut diamond of equivalent size. If you happen to miss that precious sparkler, never fear — the gravel is recycled and sorted by experts after the amateurs have left.

It is a day's visit to the past in more senses than one. In South Africa there are still vast areas where the hectic pace of modern life has yet to take hold, where good old-fashioned hospitality is usual.



Sifting gravel for diamonds

MINE OF INFORMATION

■ The author travelled with Virgin Atlantic (01293 747747), which has daily flights from Heathrow to Johannesburg. Flight fares start at £411 if booked before July 11 for travel by September 30. Virgin Holidays (01293 617181) also has a week's flydrive from £759 a person.

■ The Digger's Tour costs £23 for the day, including meal, but excluding transport. Telephone (00 27 11 462 3766).

■ Goldmine tours: the favourite is Gold Reef City (00 27 11 496 1600), a replica mining town with hotels, shops, restaurants and theme park based around Shaft 14 of Crown Mines, just southwest of central Johannesburg. Visits offer a tour down a goldmine, plus gold pouring, at £5.30 per person, self-drive. Coach tours with guide are available through Springbok Atlas (00 27 11 396 1053) at £27 a person.

■ Reading: *The Travel Bookshop* (0171-229 5260) recommends *Cry the Beloved Country*, by Alan Paton (Penguin, £6.99). *My Traitor's Heart*, by Rian Malan (Vintage, £7.99).

So, after a hard day at the diggings, visitors are served a traditional South African meal, along with a few beers and plenty of conversation.

There is *potjiekos* (meat and vegetables cooked in a pot over a fire), or a *braai* (barbecue) that includes locally made *boerewors* (farmer's sausage), *mieliepap* (maize porridge) and *sous* (tomato and onion sauce).

The *boerewors* really is good — you can take that from a Transvaal-

born lad. To round off the day, a choir from a nearby school entertains visitors with traditional songs and dancing.

Rynsberg is a 90-minute drive west of Johannesburg, through the endless maize fields running parallel to the Magaliesberg range just to the north.

Like much of the highveld, the road from Johannesburg seems to go on forever, but suddenly you are there, a small farm in a shallow

valley, where the meanderings of the Moo River, now a mere *spruit* (stream), have, over the ages, exposed the alluvial diamonds.

We are far from the more famous and much richer Cullinan and Kimberley diamond diggings, but about 300,000 carats have been uncovered here in the past 70 years, enough to keep the diggers away from the nearby goldfields.

The Digger's Tour is run by Johan Raubenheimer Jr, but it is Oom (Uncle) Raubie — Johan

Raubenheimer Sr — who gives authenticity to the tour with his anecdotes and his wealth of knowledge about diamond mining. Oom Raubie, now in his mid-seventies, is full of stories and statistics, accumulated over a lifetime of prospecting.

During our meal he talks about the size and colour of the diamonds found in the area, the theories of geology and the prospector's big question: just how do you find a diamond?

Most of all, he is full of tales about the characters who peopled this area a few generations ago, the fortunes made and lost, the smugglers, the security men and the customs officers.

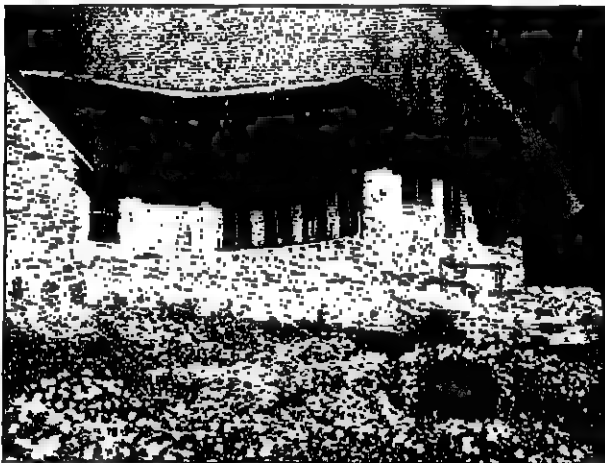
The diggings on the farm are no longer run commercially, Oom Raubie explains, but are started up only for visitors. "We are not digging on a very big scale. We leave it, and when people come along we put it into operation and when we see that our meal is very low in the freezer, then we work so that we can go to buy some food and pay some debts and pay the customs."

The pace of life may have changed little for Oom Raubie, but the relentless pursuit of the precious stones continues close by. Before returning to Johannesburg, Mr Raubenheimer Jr took us to a mine less than a mile from the farm, where amid the roar and rumble, huge machines move hundreds of tonnes of earth each day. I could see why Oom Raubie prefers the old way.



The Kimberley Diamond Mine Museum is a must for visitors

A royal welcome to the floral kingdom



The Grootbos has its own nature reserve with experts

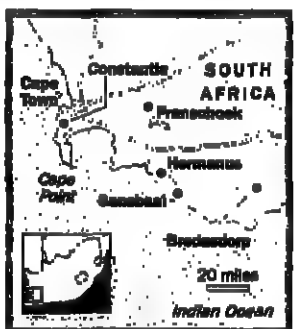
South Africa is a marvel of our time. Within a few years, it has overcome seemingly insurmountable problems, although many more remain to be confronted. The extra bonus of visiting South Africa now is that you have a ringside seat on history.

As a veteran collector of good hotels, I had an additional incentive for a visit. For a long time, I have been hearing about the Cape's wonderful hotels. Are they really as good, irrespective of their price brackets, as their European counterparts?

It is absurd to generalise, but in a fortnight we visited four hotels and scored four winners. And from all I heard, I am confident that I could have multiplied that list several times over if I had travelled further and stayed longer.

But I also had a stroke of luck, finding one hotel — Grootbos Lodge By the Sea, 100 miles east of Cape Town — that wasn't simply as good as the best in Europe, but a one-off, a place that offered something very special. It was like a lepidopterist who nets a rare butterfly, or a publisher's reader who finds a new *Lucky Jim*.

To appreciate what it has to offer, you need to know that the area between Cape Town and Port Elizabeth, typified by Plettenberg Bay, has been classified by botanists as one of the world's six "floral kingdoms". The Cape Kingdom, known as the *fynbos*, covers a relatively small percentage of the Earth's surface, but contains more than 8,500 different plant species. I had never



heard of the *fynbos* before, but it has certainly registered with me now, thanks to Michael Lutzeyer, an ardent ecological enthusiast, who has created the Grootbos nature reserve. He bought 1,000 hectares of coastal plain and mountains a few years ago and has established a special hotel, with eight beautifully appointed chalets, overlooking a stirring sweep of the Indian Ocean.

As far as possible, these are furnished using only indigenous material, cunningly landscaped in the milkwood forest to provide maximum privacy.

There are open fireplaces in the lounges, and terraced balconies overlooking a stupendous arc of Walker Bay in the Indian Ocean from Danger Point in the east to Hermanus and the Kleinmond mountains in the west. On fine days you can see Cape Point 60 miles away.

The chalets are special in themselves, but what distinguishes Grootbos from other lovingly designed chalet-style hotels in a spectacular landscape is the presence, among the enthusiastic staff,



The coastline between Cape Town and Port Elizabeth has been designated by botanists as a "floral kingdom", exemplified by Plettenberg Bay

of a resident botanist, marine biologist and ornithologist, engaged to help the visitor appreciate the many unique features of this area.

You do not need to take advantage of their services in walks, drives and ocean trips, but you would be foolish to miss the chance. Eighty-five species of birds have been

identified on the nature reserve, including such rarities as the African Black Oystercatcher. Gorgeous proteas abound among the numerous species of flora. I would never describe myself as a serious nature-lover, but I found myself enthralled by the variety of natural life displayed. I had no idea, for

instance, that I would find the life of the dung beetle so fascinating. The Grootbos — its slogan "luxury cottages in harmony with the ecology" — includes a daily morning delivery to your chalet of provisions (bread, yoghurt, meat, cheese, fruit, eggs — enough to provide both breakfast and lunch) and an excel-

lent dinner in the lodge. The services of the specialist staff, boat and four-wheel drive trips, bicycles, horses and a swimming pool are all included in the basic price. Only wine costs extra. Single-night bookings are not accepted.

We had only two days available for our visit, but would willingly have stayed

longer. I wish we could have visited between July and December and had a chance to see the Southern Right whale mating and calving just offshore. It is not often that you find a place to stay that stimulates the mind as much as it pampers the flesh.

Hilary Rubinstein is Editor of The Good Hotel Guide.

FACT FILE

■ The author stayed at Grootbos Lodge by the Sea (00 27 2834 4038), which charges £80 a person sharing, £100 single a night, to include breakfast, dinner, excursions and horse riding. Rates increase by 10-15 per cent in September. Transfers are available from Cape Town at £40 per person, £65 for groups.

■ Other recommended hotels: Arncliffe Hotel (00 27 2847 59000). Daily B&B rates, £32-£46 a person. No children under 12. Close to the southern tip of South Africa, 140 miles from Cape Town, in a tiny fishing village. A modern hotel overlooking the Indian Ocean. Miles of empty sandy beaches with great surfing. Car essential. The 24 rooms are all furnished with style. Food and service also classy. Worth paying for sea-facing room (best of all, numbers 25 to 30). It is the most relaxing seaside hotel I have visited.

■ Auberge Burgundy (00 27 2837 0120). B&B rates, £31-36 a person. If you have had enough of Arncliffe, try this modern hotel in smart, bustling Hermanus. Superior wineries are situated close by. It overlooks sea and enjoys best restaurant in town, the Burgundy. The 13 rooms are large, with superior facilities and designed with refined understatement. There are magnificent beaches to east and west. A bonus: between August and November you will have grandstand views close to shore of the Southern Right whale.

■ L'Auberge du Quartier Français (00 27 2187 6215). Daily B&B rates, £60 a person. One of the three famous wine areas of the Cape, Franschhoek is also a mecca for gourmets. Splendid restaurants line the main street. The cooking at the Auberge is supremely good — classic Provencal cuisine enhanced by subtle Cape Malay flavours. Consists of a fine country house hotel, with 17 luxurious rooms and suites in small cottages surrounding a central pool.

■ Constantia Uitsig (00 27 2179 46500). Daily rates £46 a person, room only. A private 200-acre wine farm in beautiful mountain landscape, blissful country-house style hotel, with 12 cottages, pool, and two fine restaurants, highly regarded by well-heeled gourmets of the locality. Ice-cold Atlantic and warm Indian Oceans both within a half-hour's drive. 15 minutes from central Cape Town. Spectacular area for walking, hiking and wine-tasting.

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مكتبة الأمل

Hungary: Both Buda and Pest have an illuminated elegance, while outside there's Bull's Blood and a torture museum

In the footsteps of Attila the Hun

Margitsziget, Margaret Island, is neither Buda nor Pest but an elegant park in the middle of the Danube. There is an old Hungarian saying, "Love begins and ends on Margitsziget", and romance is certainly in the air with waltz music emanating from speakers hidden in trees. Apart from buses, and taxis bringing guests to the two hotels on the island, motor vehicles are banned. Traffic consists of bicycles, pedal-cars and horse-drawn carriages. A café serves sundaes and knickerbocker glories, a man sells balloons: we seemed to have stepped back in time.

The two hotels supposedly cater for rich invalids. Hardly fitting that description, we nevertheless stayed at the Ramada Grand, the older of the two, in a vast suite with massive rosewood furniture: our son's cot was like a cage in some private menagerie. An underground passage links the Ramada Grand to the modern Thermal Hotel: the hotels share spa facilities. Beside a large swimming-pool, there are three smaller pools fed by hot springs, each at slightly different temperatures, as well as a sauna and a steam room. I understand that Carlos the Jackal used to stay at the Thermal Hotel.

Beside the spa there are two public pools on the island, the Hajos Alfred Nemzeti Sportuszoda, and Palatinus Strand, with segregated nudist terraces and a gay area. Some people swim in the river, then sunbathe on the concrete banks, looking as if they have been washed ashore.

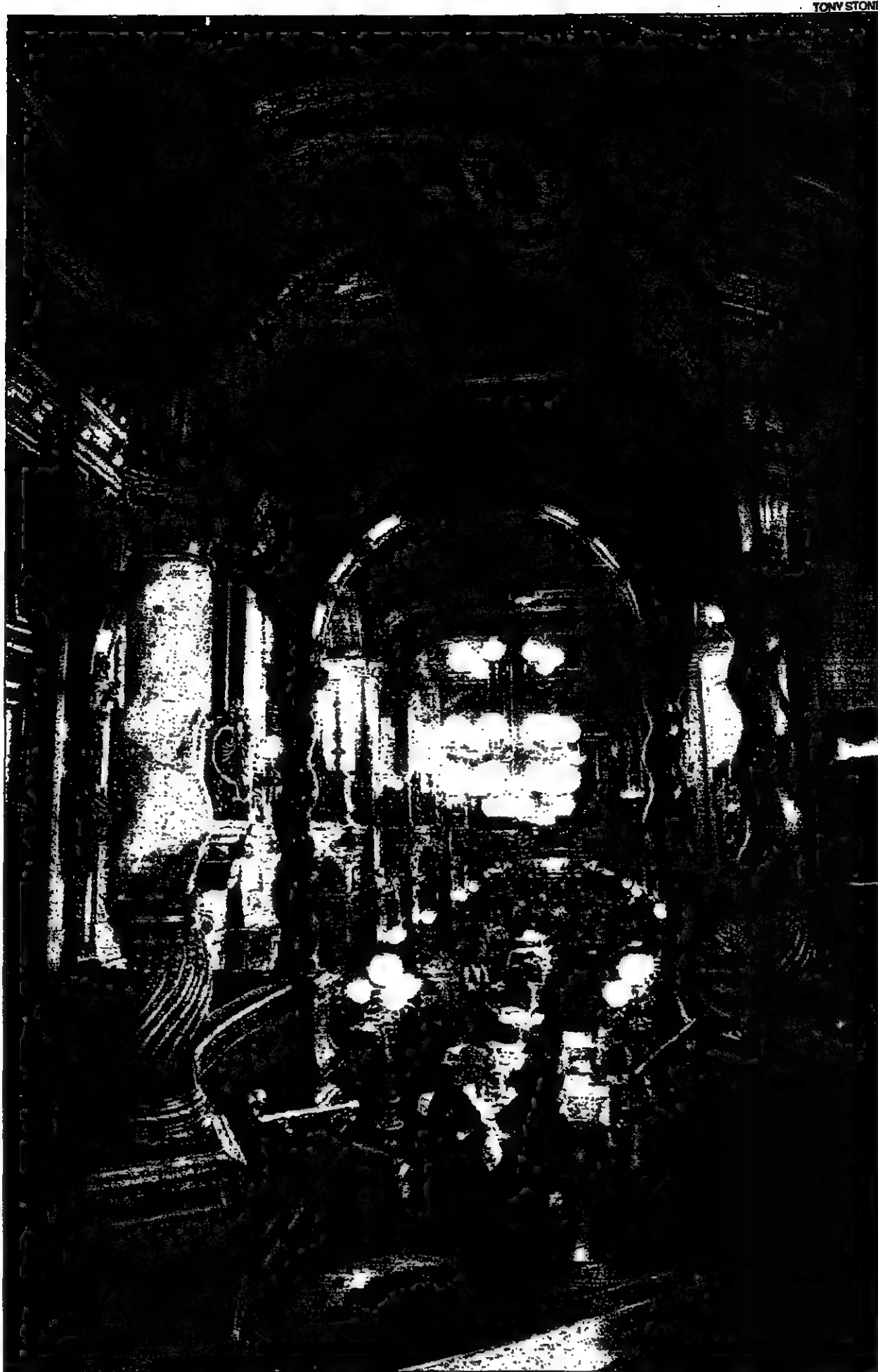
Budapest, despite its beleaguered history, is a stylish city. At night it is stunningly illuminated, the buildings and monuments on both sides of the river shimmer and float like mirages. While Buda has the more obvious and older tourist attractions, I preferred Pest with its grand fin-de-siècle boulevards, now somewhat the worse for wear, and its handsome tenements, also in some disrepair. I kept seeing places that reminded me of Paris and later I discovered that film crews come to Pest to recreate the Paris of 1920s.

The New York Kavehaz.

built in 1894 by Alajos Hauszmann, with its extraordinary baroque interior, all cherubs and twisting columns, marble and gold leaf, was once the centre of literary life in Pest: pencils and paper were provided free should the muse visit one over a demitasse. In 1956 a Soviet tank crashed into the front of the building and, 40 years later, the scaffolding is still up. The interior has been meticulously restored but the splendour is somehow lifeless, the handful of customers (attended by surly waiters) are more likely to be tourists than the literati.

Hungarian is a daunting language: Finno-Ugric, so the guidebooks say, part of the larger Altaic-Uralic group that includes Mongolian, Turkish and Finnish; its closest linguistic relatives are in northwest Siberia. I had assumed the Magyars originated on the Steppes (arriving in Europe with Attila the Hun) but academic opinion now has it that they were just one of several tribes enlisted by the great marauder on his campaigns, probably the nomadic descendants of Uighur Turks. In the 1930s a far-right political group propounded a Turko-Uralic master race with Hungary and Japan under one ethnic banner, while others have linked the Magyars to the Sumerians, the Incas and the Miwok Indians of California.

One Sunday morning I set off to District VIII (a part of town nicknamed Czika because of its reputation for gang violence) where I had been told there was an interesting flea market. An English-speaking man on the tram told me he, too, was going to District VIII and whispered ominously about the Ukrainian mafia who control the sex industry in Budapest. On József Boulevard we passed a group of prostitutes standing about yawning. Russian girls, said the man, for local men, not tourists. We passed sex shops, strip joints and small repair shops; there was broken glass in the gutters; yellow grass growing through cracks in the pavement. The man was visiting his mother in an apartment building where the stucco had



Extraordinary baroque interior of the Café Hungaria in Budapest, all twisting columns, marble and gold leaf

fallen away in great clumps. I soon found the market. Józsefvárosi Plac. Security guards were frisking people for guns but the crowd inside the gates seemed placid enough. Despite its evident popularity, there was not much variety: stainless steel pots and pans, cassettes of dance music, T-shirts with nonsense messages, calculators and digital watches, pirat-

ed fashion items. The stallholders were mainly Chinese — I was surprised to discover a Chinese community in Budapest — sometimes Gypsies, the men short and dark and the women in headscarves and long skirts. There was nothing worth buying but I enjoyed the frantic atmosphere, the haggling and hawking.

That afternoon I climbed to the Tomb of Gül Baba, the northernmost Islamic shrine in Europe, at the top of the steepest street in Buda (badly-laid cobbles make the ascent even more arduous) where several Ottoman houses date from the period of Turkish rule in the 16th and 17th centuries. Gül Baba, "Father of Roses", was a Dervish saint and his tomb is a small domed building decorated with gifts from pilgrims. Outside the tomb a parched rose garden stood in need of deadheading. It all seemed rather neglected. There was nothing to explain why Gül Baba was so revered. But, after a few minutes on the steps in the sunshine I warmed to the serenity of the location high above the city.

We decided to visit Szeged, a

city two hours south of Budapest by train, near the Romanian border. It was a pleasant journey across the great plains, past fields of sweetcorn and sunflowers. Szeged is on the banks of the River Tisza, somewhere beneath whose waters lies the body of Attila the Hun in a triple-layered coffin of gold, silver and lead. Attila died in AD 453 of a nosebleed while making love. The coffin presumably sank into the mud of the river bed; it has never been found.

What draws tourists to Szeged is the architecture. In March 1879 the Tisza burst its banks (a disaster referred to as "The Big Water") destroying most of the city. With international relief funds Szeged was rebuilt into a patchwork of squares and boulevards, mostly in the Hungarian Art Nouveau style. An entire town built in that style is like the set of some frothy opera. You expect a line of can-can girls around the buttercup-yellow Town Hall with its frilly tower and icing-sugar embellishments. The Ungar-Mayer house in

Dugonics Square is a voluptuous maharajah's palace, its cupola decorated with a frieze of life-size naked women, all apparently portraits of popular ballerinas.

Dom Square is a three-sided arcade building housing the bishop's palace, a theological college and a students' dormitory, with each of its brick columns a different design, some square, some circular, some twisted. Inside the arcades are 80 statues and reliefs of prominent Hungarians. We were there at the wrong time to see the musical clock which, apparently, has mechanical professors dancing around Count Klebelsburg, a former rector of the college.

At the north end of the square stands the Romanesque Votive Church that commemorates the flood and its survivors. There is a mosaic of the Virgin Mary dressed as a Hungarian peasant. A little market was taking place behind the church selling embroidered tablecloths, tins of paprika, salamis and — strangely barbaric — cowhide rugs complete with their tails.

JOE ROBERTS

Cosmopolitan cocktail

A short ride by train from the centre of Budapest, or an hour and a half upriver on the ferry, lies Szentendre, one of Hungary's most cosmopolitan villages and now home to an artists' colony of painters, sculptors and ceramists, whose works are displayed in the many galleries dotting the picturesque streets.

One of the best is the Margit Kovacs Museum, filled with the works of Hungary's best-known ceramist. The "Montmartre of the Danube", as writer Claudio Magris described this Mediterranean-style riverside settlement, with its painted houses and cloistered gardens, is also home to a Serbian minority. This is a legacy of the Serbian defeat by the Ottomans at the battle of Kosovo in 1389, when refugees poured north to avoid the advance of Islam.

The Blagovestenska Orthodox Church, on the corner of Rózsákert square, is lined with a series of evocative icons detailing Serbian history, while more light-hearted diversions are available at the engaging Wine Museum on Bogdányi street and the open-air Szentendre Village Museum, just outside the town. One of Hungary's most popular open-air cultural attractions, the museum includes replicas of a village from Szabolcs-Szatmár county in the eastern half of the country, and the best and tiniest dwellings of the ethnic German minority in the west.

Visit Eger for its castle, its museum and its wine, although not necessarily in that order. Just inside this pleasant city of 60,000, squares and cafes overlook the River Eger in the Szepességi Valley (valley of the beautiful women). Dozens of wine cellars are on the hillside of a gentle grassy slope. This is the place to try Hungary's famous Bikavér, Bull's Blood, as well

as Medoc Noir. Muskotály and Leányfarkas, a herby, medium dry white.

Eger is also a place to taste the complicated cocktail that is Hungary's history. The top of the minaret, a relic of the years when Hungary was part of the Ottoman Empire, is an excellent place from which to view the town. Perched on a hill with commanding views of Eger is the castle, from where Magyars first resisted and then eventually succumbed to the advancing Ottoman hordes. It includes an art gallery, the remains of the Gothic cathedral and a museum with Ottoman weapons as well as a gruesome museum of torture. There are underground tours of the castle's maze of cellars and passages with lively guides who explain in detail how the battle for the castle was fought and how the siege progressed.

Hungary's finest Islamic monuments are to be found in Pécs, near the Croatian border. The city's Ottoman heritage gives Pécs a lighter, almost Mediterranean atmosphere, a southern air accentuated by its verdant sloping streets, agreeable climate and youthful student population. All the empires whose armies once stomped across this much contested slice of central Europe have left their mark here. There are Roman tombs on Apaca street, a 4th-century subterranean chapel on Széni István square and part of the medieval town walls.

Apart from its rich cultural heritage, Pécs's main attraction is the Contemporary Museum on János Pannónia street. Contemporary works on display include Picasso when he was then exhibited in Paris, one of the masters of Magyar art, and his works are one of many reasons to venture outside Budapest.

ADAM LEBOR



HUNGARY FILE

- Joe Roberts travelled with Thermalia Travel (0171-586 7725) which offers two four-star hotels on Margitsziget: the Grand (previously the Ramada) and the Danubius Thermal. Prices at both start from £655 until August 30, thereafter £742, for a seven-night "Thermal Therapy" package including return flights from Heathrow on Malev, seven nights' half-board accommodation, a medical examination and a range of spa treatments. The 14-night "Complete Spa Package" starts from £1,178. Thermalia also features the Danubius Hotel Gellert, close to the city centre. Prices start from £438 for three nights, to include a Saturday.
- Tour operators featuring Hungary outside Budapest include Intra Travel (0171-323 3305) and Danube Travel (0171-493 0263). An eight-day flydrive holiday with Intra travel costs from £265 per person. A week-long package including flights, three nights in Budapest and four in Eger costs from £395 per person.
- Hungarian National Tourist Board (0171-823 1032).
- Reading: *The Travel Bookshop* (0171-229 5266) recommends: *Under The Frog*, by Tibor Fischer (Penguin, £5.99); *Budapest: A Critical Guide*, by Andras Torok (Pallas Athene, £9.95); *Between the Woods and the Water*, by Patrick Leigh Fermor (Penguin, £7.99); *Hungary, Travel Survival Kit* (Lonely Planet, £11.99).

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'Napoleon would just have to wait'

Continued from page 15
legs had gone again. That was until they saw the toy sailboats whipping across the roiling pond before us. For £1.10 we requisitioned a boat and two long sticks, and the two smaller ones spent the next half hour careering round the pond, prodding their boat into sailing forth across the waves.

By now, their father was expected, so we just had time to walk across the grand Pont Alexandre III and wave at Invalides. Napoleon would have to wait for the next visit.

Day Three: the Bohemian Left Bank, which tallied with our subversive adolescent who suggested we stayed in bed all day.

We took a taxi to the Musée d'Orsay and spent an entire morning admiring not only the wonderful Impressionist collection but also the old station building itself. My daughter had just read *Degas and the Little Dancer* and was delighted to find the ballerina statue with her turned-up nose. Their father wilted long before they did, and that was before they hit the gift shop and couldn't decide whether Monet or Seurat would adorn their bedroom walls.

After the morning spent improving ourselves, we plonked down at Les Deux Magots on Saint-Germain, the



Merrow, Max and Gus take in lunch overlooking the Seine

old watering-hole of Hemingway and Sartre. The children weren't impressed. The waiter wasn't much impressed with us either. I don't think we were scenic enough for the front of his establishment.

The Luxembourg Gardens were only a short stroll down a maze of narrow streets and the younger two swooped on the adventure playground where

the swings and ropes wouldn't have disgraced the Territorial Army. You have to pay to get in but they loved it. "This is a cool place," I was told. Outside, there were ponies to ride under the avenue of horse chestnut trees and one of those merry-go-rounds where you collect rings on a stick.

By the evening, my husband decided Paris meant frog's legs. The Auberge de la Reine Blanche was just up our street, in more ways than one. The walls were festooned with doll's house furniture, and banknotes from a wealth of countries were pinned above the bar. Edith Piaf's *La Vie en Rose* rose from somewhere and we feasted on mussels, escargots and, yes, frog's legs.

Last Day: having packed our bags ready for the off, we struck out for the Right Bank and the Marais. It was a bright Sunday morning and, in cobble squares, artists and antique dealers were setting up their stalls. We headed down Rue de Birague into the Place des Vosges, the architectural beauty of Paris's first square being somewhat lost on the children. They were, however, intrigued by the way the leaves on the trees all round the square ended in sync like some large communal green skirt.

We then spent a happy hour in the Musée Picasso, with its secret alcoves and sculpture garden, where you can trace Picasso's artistic life from 14 years old into his nineties.

For our last lunch we moved out of old Paris and off to the multicoloured tubes of the Georges Pompidou Centre. The kids were mesmerised by the curving fountains in the Fontaine Stravinskii until hunger set in again. We gave in to popular demand: they went off to McDonald's and we sat in the Café Rive Droite next door.

The last-minute shopping trip down our street meant that Picasso and Pompidou had a lot to answer for. We were dragged into Pylones, trading in the ultra-modern and the bizarre, which is why we ended up with one purple plastic blow-up armchair, one purple blow-up bin, and a Bart Simpson chess-set.

So did they fall in love with Paris? They certainly clung tightly onto their posters and purchases, and even the interminable queue for taxis at Waterloo didn't seem to dampen their *Joie de vivre*. In fact, all I could hear was:

*"Excusez-moi
S'il vous plait
Move your butt
Get out my way"*

Britain: A visit to a stately home in Leicestershire — and the chance to invite all your friends along too



Present and correct: some of the staff who work at Stapleford Park, the 16th-century manor where the house party will be held

Slow life — with a flagon of sloe gin

If Stapleford Park has a role in life it is to make everywhere else look scruffier by comparison. It does this very well. Those who visit look all about them, admire the decor and resolve that when they get home they will buy new lampshades, give the bathroom a good scrubbing and remove that old bone from the dog basket and the squashed After Eight mint from the back of the bookshelf.

This 16th-century manor house in 500 acres of Leicestershire countryside is intimidating at first, what with the smart cars outside, including a vintage Rolls-Royce. Ours was one of the few that did not have a FREDI or BILL2 registration plate, so we parked discreetly. I resolved to keep my jacket on in case anyone should see the Marks & Spencer label, but I need not have worried. The staff, most of whom are local, were delightfully unsnooty. They were all attired in plus fours, tweed waistcoats and shirts printed with hunting insignia and looked a bit like a feature on what well-dressed gillies are wearing this season.

The guests were a surprise, too. I had expected them to be affluent octogenarians, but most were young(ish) and generally like us. One woman even wore the same M&S jacket as me. Some people had brought their dogs but we had left our Jack Russell behind in case she disgraced us.

We were led past oak paneling, tapestries and Venetian glass mirrors to our room — cunningly named "Lakeview" because it overlooked the lake — which was pretty. There were also some nice touches — chocolate chip biscuits, a flask of chilled water and a flagon of sloe gin which we immediately



Indulge yourself in the luxurious Carnegie Club spa

STAPLEFORD FACT FILE

■ Stapleford Park, near Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire LE14 2EF (01572 787522). Rooms cost from £165 a night for two people. A Clarins facial is £46 and a Falconer's Walk costs £30 per person.

■ Some forthcoming Stapleford events: Tennis Challenge, July 26-27. Gardens open to the public on August 2, plus open-air evening concert by Esterhazy Orchestra. Afternoon concert, August 10, by Pasadena Roof Orchestra.

drank. We looked at the options for the afternoon — carriage driving, hot-air ballooning, pheasant shooting etc. — but decided instead to collapse on the sunbeds with a gentle swim afterwards.

Stapleford used to be part of the estates of John O'Gaunt, but the present house dates from the 16th century and was owned over the centuries by earls and lords that I had never heard of until 1996 when it was bought by Peter de Savary, whom I had.

A house like this inevitably sets you wondering about the owner. How, for instance, does Mr de Savary (or PDS as does Mr de Gaunt) in reverent his staff call him? Does his bank manager send him nasty letters like mine does to me? We had two hours' before dinner so I sat in the Jacuzzi doing sums. Being a committed shopper, I knew the hanging lanterns in the pool area must have cost at least £500 each and the blue mosaic tiles about £1 each and there are squillions of them and suddenly I realised why a ham sandwich here costs £7. Then I was persuaded to have a Clarins facial so I lay

on a bed and listened to soothing music while a charming lady called Sally rubbed lotions into my tired chops for 45 minutes until I was snoring.

Dinner in the Grinling Gibbons dining room was wonderful. I had white wine with the smoked salmon, red wine with the guinea fowl and I can't remember what happened after that except there was a hot water bottle in the bed (with a tartan cover) and my shoes had been thoughtfully stuffed with tissue. I blame the sloe gin but when I tried to press Channel 4 on the remote control I found I had dialled my stepdaughter's recall number on the mobile telephone instead. She told me to pull myself together.

The next day we listened to the seriously good jazz quartet in the saloon and then ventured into nearby Melton Mowbray. Every other shop was selling the celebrated Melton Mowbray pork pies but we asked two people in the street to recommend one and they both said we couldn't go wrong with Ye Olde Pork Pie

Shops. The boisterous serving girls were offering what they called samples but which were actually great wedges of crispy-crusted heaven. We ate three each and bought enough pies to sink a battleship.

Then it was back to Stapleford for a falconry lesson. Stapleford has two falconers, one named Peter, the other named Paul, although I was the only person who thought this amusing. Paul showed us his birds — falcons, hawks, an eagle and an owl — sitting on their perches in the gardens wearing furious expressions. He gave us leather gauntlets to protect us against the talons that can crush a rabbit's skull and we set off with a hawk called Arrow for a Falconer's Walk. This involved us walking around the grounds while Arrow flew from tree to tree at a discreet distance and dropped in occasionally for some chopped chicken which we held aloft.

At one point he flew into some nearby bushes. "I think he's seen something," said Paul with masterly understatement as a pheasant emerged from the undergrowth, clucking in outrage and only just escaped with his life if not his dignity. Paul pointed out that Arrow weighed 1lb 9oz while the poorly pheasant must have weighed about 5lb. I asked Paul if the birds often attacked creatures larger than themselves. "Well, we have had a bit of a problem with Jack Russells," he said.

After a vast lunch I wandered through the Great Hall and gazed out of the window, where the view probably has not changed much since the days of John O'Gaunt, up to think I would never see him cantering across the rolling acres in his black armour, or throw my scarf in the air so knights could joust over it, and how crushingly unfair life is. But then John O'Gaunt never enjoyed the blue-mosaic swimming pool, the jazz quartet, or nodded off with Sally rubbing elixir into his face.

MARY GOLD

BECOME LORD OF THE MANOR FOR A NIGHT

Win a house party worth £25,000

IN NOVEMBER 1996, Stapleford Park opened as an Outpost of the legendary Carnegie Club at Skibo Castle in the Highlands of Scotland.

In the heart of the Leicestershire countryside, Stapleford Park is set in 500 acres of magnificent Capability Brown park and woodland. With its wide range of country pursuits and luxurious accommodation, Stapleford Park offers both guests and members the opportunity to enjoy a house party atmosphere in the spirit of those enjoyed by the flamboyant guests of Andrew Carnegie in the grand Edwardian era.

The 51 bedrooms at Stapleford have each been individually designed by such luminaries as Mulberry, Designers Guild, Nina Campbell, Crabtree & Evelyn, and Tiffany.

With reception rooms that are furnished with antiques, paintings, prints and furni-



At home in the drawing room at Stapleford Park

ture as befitting one of England's finest stately homes. Stapleford Park maintains an elegant, relaxed setting and provides its guests with excellent hospitality and friendly service.

25 per cent off stays at Stapleford Park

THIS IS HOW you can win an exclusive House Party at Stapleford Park for you and your friends, up to a total of 80 (40 double rooms).

The programme for the House Party will be as follows:

Day 1

- Guests arrive at Stapleford in time for lunch.
- Afternoon activities will include clay pigeon shooting, archery, tennis, mountain biking, horse riding, mini-golf, falconry and use of the Carnegie Clarins Spa. (NB: horse riding and Clarins beauty treatments are not included in the prize.)
- Champagne reception in the Saloon.
- Gala dinner in the Grand Hall of the house.

Day 2

- Breakfast in the Grinling Gibbons Dining Room.
- Mid-morning departure.



Cosy corner of a comfortable bedroom

All accommodation, activities, food and wine are included in the prize.

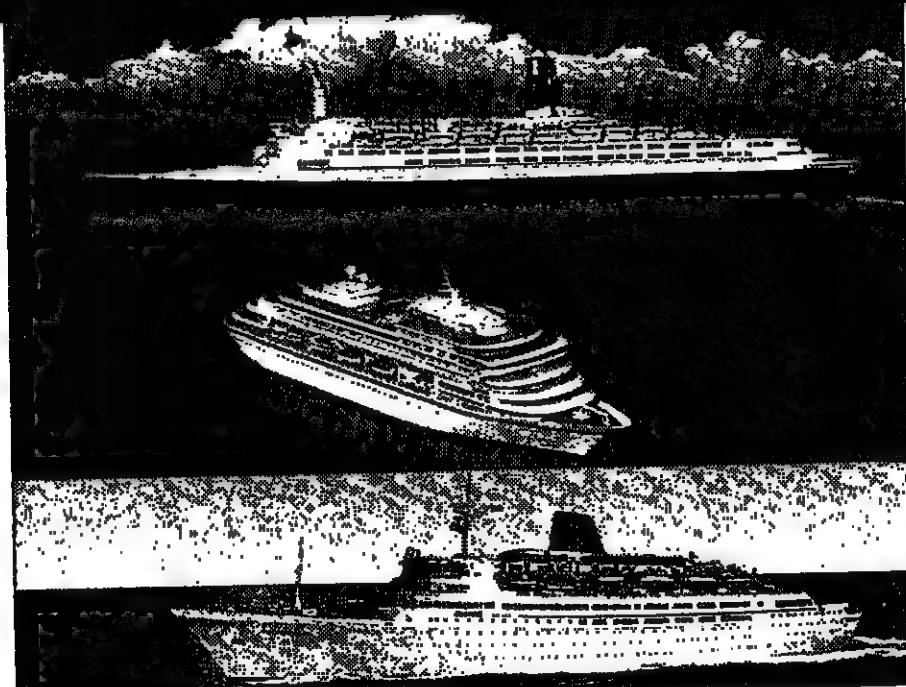
In order to qualify for entry to the competition, Times readers must stay at Stapleford Park during the period August 1 to November 30, 1997. Each night at Stapleford Park will qualify

for entry into the prize draw. As an exclusive introduction to Stapleford Park following a refurbishment, including the Carnegie Clarins Spa, the following benefit will be available to Times readers for this period.

Between August 1 and November 30, a 25 per cent reduction on accommodation rates and dinner (excluding drinks) will be accorded to Times readers on submission of this article with their letter confirming the reservation. This offer is valid for stays of two nights or more and is subject to availability. Room prices start from £165 plus VAT before discounts. For reservations please call 01572 787522 and mention the Times offer.

The prize draw will take place on December 2, 1997, and the prize may be taken between January 3 and March 31, 1998, excluding Friday and Saturday nights, and is subject to availability.

The draw is open to readers who stay at Stapleford Park for at least one night (two nights if using the 25 per cent discount offer) between Aug 1-Nov 30, 1997. The draw will take place on Dec 2, 1997. The prize may be taken between Jan 3-Mar 31, 1998, excluding Friday and Saturday nights, subject to availability. T&Cs, competition rules apply. This cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer.



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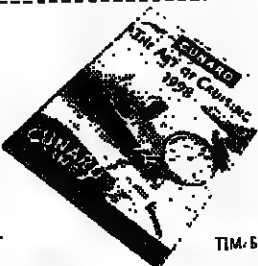
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ATUL 34

AROUND THE WORLD: A WEEKEND GUIDE

Laos leaves its door ajar

HUNDREDS of man-sized pots are scattered over the so-called Plain of Jars surrounding Phonsavan in Laos; their use and origins are still something of a mystery.

Long Haul specialist Bales Tours (01306 741526) has put together a ten-day holiday to explore one of the least known Indo-Chinese countries which only opened its doors to visitors in 1992. The itinerary includes three nights in the capital Vientiane, three nights in world heritage site Luang Prabang to visit its temples and waterfalls, and two nights in Phonsavan. The price is £1,435 for return flights via Bangkok, full board in Laos and excursions.

New look at the Louvre

WITH the overcrowding and horrors of the old Louvre now become a thing of the past, art specialist Prospect Tours (0181-995 2163) is offering a two-night trip to the "New Grand Louvre" from November, accompanied by specialist guides.

In the new Richelieu Wing, American architect I. M. Pei has created a hall which reproduces the scale of the original setting in the Palace du Luxembourg of the series of paintings by Rubens on the life of Marie de Medici. A room has been created to display Poussin's Seasons, and another one has been made for the smaller works of Holbein and Dürer.

The price of £253 covers travel by Eurostar, two nights B&B accommodation, a one-day museum pass, a museum tour and also a carnet of Métro tickets.

Footpath repair

YOU can learn skills such as dry-stone walling, charcoal making, footpath repair and fencing on the National Trust's work-

ing holidays which take place around Britain this summer. Projects include building a cycle path and repairing footpaths in Co Durham with volunteers living in a tented camp in the grounds of a lighthouse. More footpath restoration is taking place on some of the higher peaks of Snowdonia, staying in a mountain rescue base. The holidays cost from £20 for a short break to £50 for a week's

project. For a copy of the National Trust Working Holidays brochure call 0891 517751 (50p a minute).

THE New York Convention & Visitors Bureau is offering a hotel booking service for the peak September 1-December 31 season. Accommodation in all price ranges will be on offer. The booking service is free, but not the telephone call from this country (001 212 582 3352). Bookings from the United States are toll-free on 1 800 946 766.

Sweet Georgia

USING the new British Mediterranean airline direct flights to Tbilisi, Regent Holidays of Bristol (0117-921 1711) has come up with an unusual weekend break: you explore the churches, synagogues and mosques in the Georgian capital, buy souvenirs in the market which sells everything from treadsless tyres to fine silverware, travel the Great Military Highway to see the 6th-century Byzantine hilltop church at Dzhvari, and visit Gori, Stalin's birthplace, where his former house is now a museum.

Expect basic accommodation, reasonable food (though not for vegetarians), and excellent wine and brandy. The three-night B&B break, including flights, costs from £555.

Historic USA

A SERIES of imaginative themed itineraries from North American Highways (01902 851138), tailor-made for independent motorists, link history and culture with accommodation in old inns and wilderness lodges.

On an 18-night Planters of



Temple murals in Luang Prabang. This world heritage site is part of a ten-day tour of Laos, which only opened its doors to visitors in 1992

Virginia Tour (£712-£899) you visit the homes of wealthy patricians - Washington's Mount Vernon and Jefferson's Monticello are two of them - with stops at Civil War battlefields and other sites en route.

The Watermen of Maryland Tour (£584-£852 for 16 nights) looks at how the other half lived: the tough independent eastern seaboard "cowboys", the local skipjack fishermen. The tour includes a stay in the Chesapeake Wood Duck Inn on Tilghman Island, home of the last remaining antique skipjack fleet.

Prices do not include flights which can be arranged. Car hire is an additional £256 per week.

JILL CRAWSHAW'S TRAVEL TIPS

ALTHOUGH the price of most peak season accommodation can soar in beach resorts, Italian city stays can often be cheaper than usual.

Accommodation Line (0171-409 1343), the firm that specialises in family-run Italian pensions, small hotels and B&Bs (with some in the £20-£25 per person per night range), is offering an extra night free for bookings of two or more nights until the end of August. The cities included are Rome, Venice, Florence, Bologna and Turin. Room Service (0171-636 6888), another

Italian specialist, has summer savings in Florence, Venice, Rome, Milan, Bologna and Naples from July 15-August 31.

Good guides

MY admiration for the Rough Guides was given a huge boost last year when I received a panic message that my peripatetic gap year son was in hospital "in Bali". While other leads to his whereabouts got nowhere, the hospital information in *Bali and Lombok* Rough Guides (£8.99) was spot on. A number of the more popular

European destinations have been revised this year. *The Rough Guide to France* (£12.99) reveals the literary bent of its authors Tim Salmon and Kate Baillie - who else knew that novelist Guy de Maupassant sailed his yacht into the port during his final high-life binge before the onset of syphilis insanity? *The Rough Guide to Corsica* (£9.99) is co-written by David Abram, who has also written the *Rough Guide to Goa* (£9.99).

New or revised editions of the guides are also available for Spain (£11.99), Barcelona (£8.99), Tuscany and Umbria (£10.99), Washington DC (£8.99) and Turkey (£12.99).



High cost when you phone home

From: Robert Wallis, University of London.

SOME weeks ago, you reported on visitors to Eastern Europe who were shocked to be charged several hundred pounds for a simple meal. I have discovered a Cotswold hotel which has a not too dissimilar attitude to the cost of telephone calls.

I have stayed in the Dormy House, near Broadway, many times and have often recommended it to friends in Japan and Taiwan. On a recent visit, I made a ten minute, ten second call to Taiwan which, according to BT, would normally cost in the region of £9.20. But when I received my bill, I was stunned to see a charge of £46.20, a mark-up of just over 400 per cent.

When I queried this, I was told in a rather supercilious way that "international calls are expensive". I have since been on a trip to Kyoto, Japan, where, for a five-minute call to the UK, I was charged just £2.50.

A spokeswoman for the Dormy said: "Our calls are charged at 22p per unit which is displayed on a tag attached to the receiver. We are very competitive with other hotels in the area, in many cases, are lower. We also have a BT payphone in the lobby."

From: John Smith, Haverhill.

THE article "Casals revamp brings chaos" (June 12) claimed that hoverships take 90 minutes from Dover to Calais. This is incorrect. The crossing time is just 35 minutes with a motorway-to-motorway ferry time of about 50 minutes, ten minutes quicker than the article.

We welcome letters on holiday travel. Send them to Letters, Travel Department, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN, or fax 0171-762 5124.

Beduin and breakfast

Weeks later, there is still fine sand in my purse and the pockets of my dressing-gown. Also in my sponge bag, toothpaste lid and the alarm clock. It rickles from the oddest places without warning.

Not that the sand of the southern Sinai desert is particularly fine: it has more of a bouldery, building-site quality to it, especially inside your shoes. The reason for the finely filtered quality of the stuff I brought home is that it was efficiently sieved: it blew in through the gaps in our hut's bamboo sides. The northern gale made our clothes, hanging on nails, dance and kick the night away in a windy ballet, and drove us shuddering under the heavy Bedu blanket.

In short, it was wonderful. My scuba-addicted young son and I chose this particular package in Egypt because it was the cheapest way to be right on a beach with a reef: £281 a head including tacky

Libby Purves tries a diving holiday on the Egyptian coast

charter flight, but just big enough for a mattress, one clean sheet, two moulting pillows and all the goat's cheese rolls you can eat at breakfast.

"Beduin and breakfast," he said a little faintly when we saw it and indeed Shark's Bay Camp, north of the port and resort of Sharm el Sheikh and Na'ama, is owned and run by Sheikh Embarak. Local Bedu in lounge about on its carpeted sand at night by the smouldering campfire as freely as foreign backpackers.

The company was eclectic: not all divers, although a polyglot assortment joined us on rough, exhilarating, sometimes overnight dive journeys down to the Ras

Mohammed underwater reserve and round into the Gulf of Suez to explore the wreck of the Thistlegorm.

There was Paul, a Californian balloon pilot on his way back from Kenya and trying to avoid tourist spots because he works in one, a wandering bemused Spaniard called Josef, and a number of huge Czech lads who had come overland. One night on the boat after Mohammed's fine tuna supper they were brandishing their duty-free and demonstrating their superb grasp of English. "Famous Grouse!" said one. "Johnny Walker!" riposted another.

Josef the Spaniard rushed to join in. "Kentucky Fried Chicken!" he cried. There was a silence.

They all dived under the commendably fierce control of the instructor Pino, who brooks no sand-stirring, coral-bashing or fish-feeding. I snorkelled, sometimes raising the top of my mask above water to enjoy the contrast between the desolation of the mountains and the fertile brightness of coral below.

Best of all, though, was the sense of tourist innocence. The bed might be full of sand but our camp blended sweetly into the ancient coast: a few arches, low huts, shabby striped tents, a shower block heroically urging water conservation. One Bedu in tent for a restaurant and another in which an elderly man of immense dignity sold



Local Beduin lounge about on the carpeted sand

stripped druggets "very cheap". For miles to the south and north of this simplicity we saw a coast being enthusiastically ruined by international holiday villages, tacky mock-Moorish hotels and rip-off souvenir stalls. By happy chance, our cheap option turned out to be the most precious. Before settling down to each night's sandswept

sleep, we could stand by our hut and see comet Hale Bopp and a million stars.

It felt very like a farewell; and indeed each morning brought the bleep and rumble of the diggers ever closer.

Regal Holidays (01353 778096) organises diving holidays in Sharm el Sheikh from £290 a week. Learn to dive courses cost from £150.

Jon Ashworth visits the Viet Cong tunnels of Cu Chi

GUNFIRE CRACKLED in the humid air as we picked our way through the trees. Huge craters appeared, the ground devastated by tonnes of high explosive, and a US Army helicopter beckoned, squatting in silence like some brooding beetle. One could feel the weight of invisible eyes, watching.

Not Saigon, 1969, but Ho Chi Minh City. Twenty miles out from the Tan Son Nhut airbase, now an international airport, the killing zone of Cu Chi has been transformed into one of the world's most chilling tourist attractions. The B2s have given way to Jeeps and the craters are tree-lined and choked with grass.

The Bell HU-1 Iroquois on the edge of the clearing is a brown skeleton, stripped bare, lousier-like. The gunshots come from a firing range, where visitors can take their pick of automatic weapons, blasting away like Rambo at a cost of a dollar a bullet. And the eyes belong to the souvenir vendors, eager to weigh you down with polished shell-casings and counterfeit GI fighters.

In ten years of war, the Americans probably dropped more high explosive on Cu Chi than any other corner of Vietnam. Here, startlingly close to Saigon, lay the Cu Chi tunnels - more than 100 miles of underground passages and chambers, carved by hand using rudimentary tools, and stretching across the border into Cambodia. Today, portions of the tunnels have been opened up, providing a fasci-

In the killing zone



Close look at the passages

nating insight into the hell that was Vietnam.

Returning Vets have not taken kindly to an introductory film, heavy in praise for the patriots who won medals for "killing Americans". Grim-faced girls in army uniform speak of courage and resolve during the "American War". The tunnels themselves are gruelling. Visitors are invited to shuffle through pitch darkness, drenched in sweat from the humidity.

Chambers have been made into field hospitals and kitchens, right under the nose of patrolling US infantrymen. Tourists can inspect the command centre from which Viet Cong commanders launched

the Tet Offensive of 1969. Pits filled with spikes lie at the tunnel entrances, ready to snare intruders.

Partisans tended paddy fields by night, recreating underground before daylight brought a fresh onslaught of bombs and missiles. The soil of Cu Chi is as hard as iron, and the tunnels withstood the severest of punishment.

Perhaps most disconcerting of all is the firing range. Soldiers who perhaps spent years in the jungle now hand round AK-47s and M-16s, using up clips abandoned by the Americans after the fall of Saigon. One Japanese visitor is rumoured to have spent \$1,000 on ammunition.

Posing by the shattered Huey, with weapon in hand, and a Viet Cong bandanna round your neck, one can only reflect on the ironies of this terrible war.

Thai Airways (0171-499 9113, London, or 0161-831 7861, Manchester) flies daily non-stop from London to Bangkok, with onward daily connections to Ho Chi Minh. Flights from Bangkok to Hanoi operate every day except Thursday and Sunday. Return fares from £821, including taxes.

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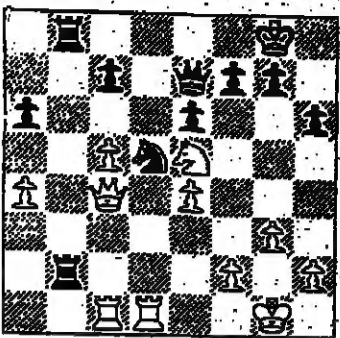
by Raymond Keene

THE outstanding player in the English team which won the gold medals in the European Team Championship at Pula, was grandmaster Matthew Sadler.

Sadler's forte is counterattack with the black pieces. Indeed, so successful is he with Black that he has notched up with Black a record of ten consecutive wins with Black in last year's chess Olympiad and the Pula competition.

The following position shows just how dangerous he can be.

White: Dindar; Black: Sadler. European Team Championship, Pula 1997.



In this position White appears to be pressing. True, Black's rooks control the b-file, but there is a latent threat of Ne6, forking Black's queen and rook, and meanwhile Black's central knight is under attack. Sadler's solution is startling.

23 ... Ne3

An amazing coup. White has no choice but to capture.

24 fxe3 Qg5

With the dual threats of ... Qxe5 and ... Qxe3, if now 25 Qd4 Qh5 26 h4 Qe2 and Black wins 25 Qc3 Qh5 26 Rde3.

Again, if 26 h4 Qe2. The text hopes for 26 ... Rde3 27 Qxb2 when White's problems would be over, but Black is remorseless.

26 ... Kf7 27 Rde2

An admission of defeat. White cannot retain his extra material. The weakness of his second rank has proved fatal.

27 ... Rxd2 28 Qxd2 Qxe5 29 Qd4 Qg5 30 Rf1 e5 31 Qc3 f6

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene. White to play. This position is from the game Staunton-Worrall, London 1859. How did White smash through the black defences?

Send your answer on a postcard to *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. The first correct answer drawn on Thursday will win a year's subscription to the Staunton Society, which includes a free invitation to the annual dinner at Simpson's-in-the-Strand. The answer will be published next Saturday.

Last week's solution: 1... Re2+

Black's combination has left him with a rock-solid position, some initiative and deadly play against White's shattered pawn structure.

32 Kg2 Qg4 33 Qe4 e5 34 h3 Qd7 35 Qe2 Qe6 36 Rd1 Rb4 37 Rde Rde4 38 Rce Rb4 White resigns

British chess must once again express its thanks to merchant banker Duncan Lawrie which has, for so many years, supported the costs of sending the English team to international events.

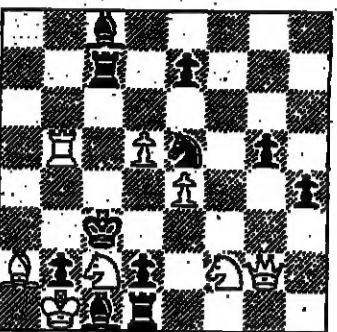
At long last its efforts have been rewarded with the gold medals.

Prize puzzle. The following position is the opening puzzle for the 1997 British Chess Solving Championship.

The problem is White to play and mate in two moves against any Black defence.

Those wishing to enter should send a cheque or postal order for £3 to cover administrative expenses with their entry which should consist of White's first move only to: British Chess Problem Society, 9 Roydfield Drive, Waterthorpe, Sheffield S19 6ND.

Those entering should enclose a stamped addressed envelope, so that they can be notified if they have reached the second, postal stage of the championship.

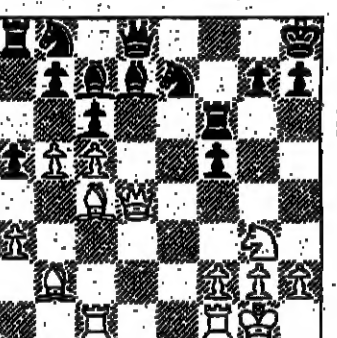


Please mention that you are entering via *The Times* when you send in your answer.

The championship is only open to UK residents and the closing date is July 31.

Good luck with your solving and I look forward to an excellent entry from *Times* readers.

Last week's winner: A C Harrison, Lightcliffe, Halifax.



PUNCHLINE

READERS are invited to write an amusing caption for the cartoon (right), from *The Strand Magazine* (reproduced from Westminster Libraries, Sherlock Holmes Collection, Marylebone Library).

The cartoon will be printed again next week with a caption from those submitted.

Send caption suggestions on a postcard with your name and address to: Strand Caption 59, Weekend, *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN.

The Editor's decision is final. The closing date for entries is Wednesday, July 9.



"Sorry, Aitken old boy, Stonehouse has already tried that"

The winning caption for last week's cartoon (above) was submitted by D. Proffitt of St Helens, Merseyside

WORD WATCHING

By Philip Howard

SONHLET

- a. A gilt piglet
- b. Chemical device
- c. A musical group

CALABOOSE

- a. A green vegetable
- b. Sunburn lotion
- c. Choke

CARACAL

- a. A gem stone
- b. A feline animal
- c. A surf boat

CUNETTE

- a. A trench
- b. A tropical vegetable
- c. A drawing instrument

Answers on page 16

COMPUTER GAMES AND PASTIMES

by Tim Wapshott



SideWinder Force Feedback Pro delivers rapid tactile sensations along the arm

and a 3-D throttle thumb wheel. The unit also uses "digital-optical technology", which is a fancy way of saying that a small sensor at the base of the joystick accurately monitors its position for constant self-righting or, with certain games, constant off-centring.

To run the Microsoft gizmo, you will need a Pentium CPU of 75MHz or better with 8 RAM, 7Mb of spare

hard disk space and running Windows 95. The joystick will be sold in America for \$149.95 (about £95) with three appropriate force feedback titles thrown in: Activision's *Interstate 76*, LucasArts's *Star Wars Shadows of the Empire: Battle of Hoth* and the aforementioned MDK: Mission Laguna Beach.

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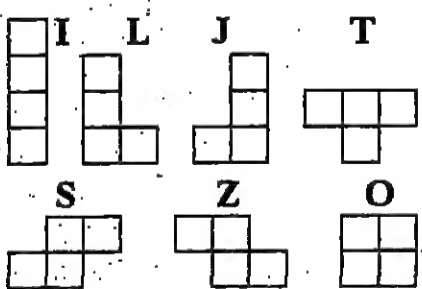
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THE LISTENER CROSSWORD

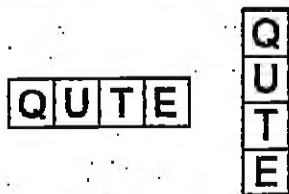
No 3417: Brick Wall by Quinapalus

IN A CERTAIN video game, bricks of various shapes composed of four squares fall one by one towards the bottom of a rectangular grid; the player can steer them left and right and rotate them in the plane of the grid as they fall; bricks can come to rest on top of the previously placed bricks, or at the bottom of the grid if there are no intervening bricks.

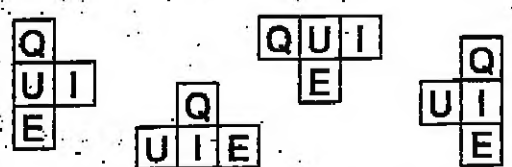
In the game played here, the grid has been completely filled with no gaps between bricks: solvers must determine the arrangement and mark the outlines of the bricks as well as entering the letters. Each brick has a corresponding clue which yields a five-letter word from which one letter is to be deleted. The definition part of the clue refers to the entire word, while the subsidiary indication refers to the letters that remain after the deletion, which do not necessarily form a word. The deleted letter indicates the shape of the brick according to the scheme below:



The remaining four letters are to be written into the grid cells which the brick occupies in order, left to right, top to bottom. For example, if a clue yields QUI(T)E (i.e. the "T" being deleted) this would correspond to an I-shaped brick:



Or, if QUI(T)E (the "T" being deleted), a T-shaped brick:



Brick clues appear in the order in which the bricks were built up from the bottom of the grid. Each row of the grid also has a corresponding clue, which is normal. Row clues appear in order from the bottom of the grid.

Chambers (1993) is recommended but does not give brick 12 (in OED); brick 33 is a regular formation also supported by OED.

Brick clues

- 1 Lost atlas includes old river-mouths
- 2 English runner
- 3 Begin second painting?
- 4 Stir up rabble
- 5 Layabout has head removed from alcoholic drink
- 6 This salt is refined from tree.
- 7 Flutes and some dulcimers
- 8 Monarch in charge of resistance
- 9 One displayed when ties shredded
- 10 Dorsal and partly frontal
- 11 One's back in navy: preparation required for bows
- 12 Straw ropes seen in roofs I'm erecting
- 13 "Tarnal tax" for a German Lord
- 14 Insects making bovine sick initially
- 15 Incessant of help in flying, when holding in fixed position
- 16 Once pours out prayers to Mary
- 17 This indicates substitute aim north of the border
- 18 Drum with loop for hanging on right
- 19 Parts of feather belonging to lady
- 20 Explosive bit of revolver found before a flight
- 21 Reinforce frayed lace
- 22 Behold painting on dry plaster
- 23 Crime downman — no jockey — seen in heavy wagons
- 24 Tramp and chop about
- 25 Shabby chap, little respected in Burns
- 26 Lowest points of asteroid that nears earth
- 27 Kara fat in odd bits of beef stew
- 28 Bad smell, mostly from slippery goo
- 29 Fast rendez-vous in Railway street
- 30 Very small person, e.g. ten centimetres round
- 31 Divides in paragraphs

Row clues

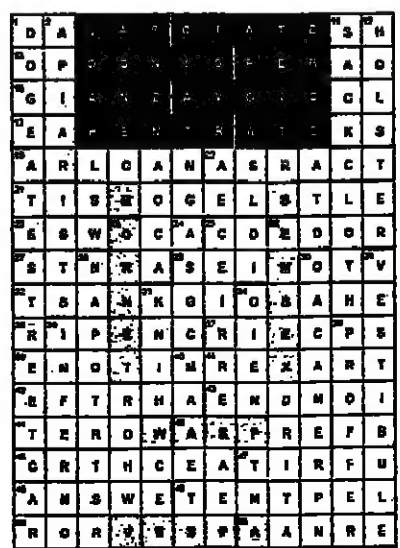
- 1 Surface turned to star
- 2 Irish vehicle emerges publicly before one sped back
- 3 Amateur croicist performing ghastly acts
- 4 Swollen volume flowing, sluice gate losing gullions
- 5 Composer, largely through medium, is introduced in Indian sect
- 6 Check design completely after falls to bits
- 7 Cancellations are overturned by guests in exclusive groups
- 8 Neuter part fell around their ruined bit of stoicism
- 9 After subtle wrong turn informant, letting on to another
- 10 Round Coon, appearing in Highway, sporting top decoration (colourful)
- 11 Best crime loosely around constant destruction of toll-gates
- 12 Place where pearls may be had certainly accepts Japanese, British and Roman money
- 13 I organise e.g. trains for French to go on fén
- 14 Plans bit of cereal with seeds in receptacles
- 15 Policeman tortures leader of scouts for negligence
- 16 Having no through route, steamship crew-member has to stick around

Solutions to No 3417

361 — The 34 by 40 grid.

THE VESTIBULE (in down) to Hall is the first one visited by Dante in his *INFERNO* (80 down). Here the indecisive man, stung by vicious words, lies (20 11), line 34-39. Through the shaded arch one can see into the vestibule (the HORNET, BEMBEK and VESPA, all types of WASP, while over the arch is written LASERTE OCNI, SPERANZA VOI CHENTRARE, the famous Abbonio hope all ye who enter here).

The winner is G. Aitken, Stroud, Wilt. The five runners-up are C. Berman, London NW11; H. Cudmore, Chesham, Glos; P. Derry, Mole; C. Widdow, M. Irvine, Manchester; J. Knowler, Portsmouth.



BRIDGE

by Robert Sheehan

THE European Championships are generally considered the toughest of all the international tournaments. The 1997 event, the 43rd, finished last Saturday, with Britain winning the women's series. It is a splendid achievement, the eleven time Britain has won: our last success was in 1981. This year's team was Pat Davies and Nicola Smith, Michele Handley and Sandra Landy, and Heather Dhondy and Liz McGowan, with Jimmie Arthur captain and Brian Senior coach. Davies, Smith and Landy were also in the 1981 team.

All three pairs played their part in the victory — they were all in the top ten (out of 68) in the Butler scoring table (a method of measuring a pair's performance against average). For the last week the team was neck and neck with the French, and held on to win by 12 Victory Points (a maximum win is 25 VPs). Britain will be one of the favourites in the Venice Cup (the women's world championship), to be held in Tunisia in October.

In the 35-team Open event, won by Italy (the holders), the British team (the Hackett and Fredrick twins and Calderwood and Sheki) finished strongly, scoring 123 VPs out of a possible 125 in their last five matches. But earlier indifferent play had left them with slightly too much ground to make up. Britain was seventh, seven VPs behind fifth place, the last qualifying spot for the Bermuda Bowl.

Liz McGowan (who with Heather Dhondy was in the team that won the Transnational Mixed Teams at the 1996 Olympiad) is an excellent technician. She was the declarer on the hand in the next column, in the critical match

Dealer West East-West Game IMPs

♠83	♥A542
♦955	♣QJ1076
♠AK988	♥75
♦AJ103	♣76
♠107	♥
♦AK843	♣
♠1042	♥
♦954	♣
♠KQJ95	♥
♦92	♣
♠QJ3	♥
♦KQ82	♣

Contract: Four Spades by South
Lead: King of hearts

against Israel. At the time the British were leading with Israel second.

Five of a minor would have been a better contract, but McGowan found herself in the slightly less secure Four Spades, against the attack of king and ace of hearts. How should she play?

See what happens if declarer ruffs the second heart. She then leads the king of spades, which East ducks. East takes the next spade and plays a heart, and now declarer is out of control — East has one more trump than she does.

McGowan saw this coming, and instead of ruffing the second heart, discarded a club. She was still safe if the trumps were three-three, and the gain came when the trumps were four-two with the ten falling doubleton — when West played a third heart dummy could ruff, enabling declarer to keep her trump holding intact. McGowan now played spades from the top, thus keeping control and only losing two hearts and the ace of spades.

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